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ON AUTUMN TRAILS

On Autumn Trails

and
Adventures in Captivity

By
Emma-Lindsay Squier

Author of "The Wild Heart"

ADVENTURE LIBRARY



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TO MY MOTHER

*from whom came the encouragement and
understanding of nature that made possible
the writing of these tales.*

ON AUTUMN TRAILS

AT SUNSET *in the* MEADOW

THESE stories came out of the north-land—Nova Scotia. It is an old-world land that civilization has not yet robbed of its charm. True, you will hear the roar of trains, you will see the scurrying of automobiles. But still the ox carts creep along the roads, the great patient beasts plodding as in a dream, and by their side go weather-beaten old men who look with annoyance and disdain on the conveyances of modern life.

It was into the silence of the forests that lie just a little way beyond the village of Liverpool that I went, with the Cap'n and the Woods Girl, and during several enchanted weeks spent in the hinterlands of Nova Scotia these stories came into being. Not all of them are mine. Most of them were told to me by

the Cap'n or the Woods Girl, and it only remained for me to put them simply and truthfully into written words.

We came upon the meadow just at sunset, the Cap'n and I. Here it was, he said, that a lady deer often came with her babies to feed upon the rich grass. Perhaps, if we kept quiet, and the wind did not betray our presence, we should see them and be able to watch them.

It was a large, fair meadow, and through the fringe of flaming maple trees which bordered the river bank filtered the level rays of the sun, molten gold. There was only the faintest breeze, just enough to bring to us sweetly the rich fragrance of the balsam, the elusive breath of the sweet-ferns, and the wet, tangy smell of leaves newly fallen.

"Just here," whispered the Cap'n, "if we wait—"

But we did not have to wait. As we paused there at the old, tumble-down stile, I caught my breath with delight. For they were there in the meadow, the lady deer, with her newest baby, a little nuzzling fawn, and a yearling buck, her child of last season, who was still

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staying with his mother and his tiny brother. All three were the light buff-brown that the beech leaves turn in autumn. Their tails were longer than those of the western deer, and were striped with white.

The lady deer cropped the grass daintily, her large ears standing out from her head at a graceful angle, her slim legs planted as though in a pose. She was quite at ease and suspected no alien presence. The little fawn was too greedy to think of anything but food, and on his wabby legs he ran round and round his gentle mother, who went on nibbling contentedly, paying no attention to his importunities or the impatient twitching of his tail. But the yearling buck was more on his guard. Young as he was, he had upon his mind, it was clear, the responsibility of his mother and his small brother. He scented the wind continually and ate little, throwing up his head with quick jerks, his wide, brown eyes scanning suspiciously the fringe of trees that came down to the meadow fence like curious on-lookers at a game.

Suddenly the lady deer raised her head, and

the small fawn stopped his nuzzling. I thought we were discovered, the Cap'n and I, but when I followed her steady gaze, I saw that she was looking beyond us, down at the far end of the meadow, where the river rippled against the roots of the flaming maple trees. And I saw then an old man with snow-white hair that stirred gently in the faint evening breeze. He was coming toward them with his hand outstretched, and I held my breath lest they take alarm and leap away. But they did not run. Instead, the lady deer minced toward him with outstretched nose, and the yearling buck followed her, his nervousness quieted for the moment. The baby fawn made little, springy leaps, his white tail bobbing like a rabbit's. It was clear that they knew the old man and loved him. It was almost as if they had come at sunset to the meadow to keep a tryst with him.

He held out something in his hand, and they nibbled at it. Then he stroked their noses, caressed the velvety, soft neck of the lady deer, rubbed the ears of the yearling buck, and knelt down to fondle the baby fawn.

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His face was beautiful in its gentleness, and I knew why the lady deer and her children loved him.

The sunset grew redder. It cast a soft flood of color over the meadow and the fringe of peeping, rustling trees that bordered it. In the full glory of it they stood there, the white-haired old man with the wild things of the woods, who were his friends. And in that moment he turned slowly and saw us standing there. I felt my face flush hotly, as if I were at fault for thus watching the meeting with his friends of the woods. But he smiled at me. And then—

The yearling buck had seen us, too. For an instant he stood like a small statue, his ears at an angle, his eyes wide upon us, his nostrils quivering. Then he uttered a series of sharp, wheezy notes, "Heh! Heh! Heh!" and dashed away across the meadow, clearing the fence with a bound, followed more leisurely by his lady mother, and by the tiny fawn, who ran and leaped earnestly, but who had never once looked in our direction.

We heard them crashing through the under-

brush and heard the panting alarm notes of the yearling buck, "Heh! Heh! Heh!" We listened until there was silence, holding ourselves tense, as if a motion from us might further alarm them.

"Well," said the Cap'n regretfully, "they've gone. We may as well go back to camp."

I turned to the meadow, hoping the old man would come and speak to us. But he, too, was gone.

The Cap'n's long strides were ahead of me on the ragged old trail that led back to the camp. He walked rapidly, for we were far from the camp-fire's glowing warmth, and in the northland there is no twilight. The darkness falls like a curtain after the play is done.

I panted a little as I plunged after him, jumping from rock to rock cushioned with thick moss, and ducked through low-arching lanes of branches that the alders and hazel bushes flung across the trail.

I wanted to ask him something very badly, and at last I called to him as I swished through a bevy of ferns that brushed against my knees. "Who was the old man in the meadow?"

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In the semi-darkness I saw the Cap'n stop and turn. I came up to him; in the dim light he was looking at me strangely.

"The old man?" he repeated, and his voice was queerly sharp.

"The one I saw there in the meadow with the lady deer and her children," I answered him.

"Why, girl," he said deliberately, "*that old man has been dead for almost two years.*"

For a moment there was silence, and I heard the rustling of the night wind far up in the branches of the oak trees; heard, too, the river, singing happily to itself. From somewhere far back in the thicket that had faded from green and crimson and gold to dull gray and black, came the utter loneliness of a night owl's call.

My thoughts were in confusion, and I stared back at him, wondering if he was laughing at me—wondering what to say—

"But I—the old man—" I stammered, "who was he?"

The Cap'n was still regarding me suspiciously, but he finally answered.

"That's a camp-fire story," he said, and quickened his steps again.

I felt the branches of the birches put out inquisitive fingers that swept my cheeks, and now and then a spider's web, spanning the narrow trail, ran its silken length across my face. I had often run the Hill Trail in the darkness, the beloved Hill Trail that lay many miles away from this strange, northland wilderness. Yet it was not strange. The night voices of the woods were the same; the fragrance breathed from many, many growing things was the same. It was as if these woods put forth their hands to give me welcome. And so we came at last to the camp and to the glow of firelight.

Later, when the pine logs crackled into flames and threw handfuls of bright-red sparks up toward the high, disdainful stars, when the shadows of the woods drew around us in a circle and the birch trees whispered to themselves of the things they had heard and seen during the golden autumn day, then it was that he told me the story of the old man in the sunset meadow.

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An old man he was, when he first came to the northland of Nova Scotia. No one knew whence he had come or why, for he kept his counsel well. He journeyed far into the wilderness, and in the meadow which is fringed about by little, inquisitive trees and bordered by the blue of the river, he made his home, building a log cabin and tilling the fields as much as one man may do unaided.

Very happily he lived there, all alone, and the wild things were his friends. He cared for a wildcat whose paw had been crushed under a falling rock. He rescued a moose calf from a pit where it had fallen and was bleating forlornly for its mother who had deserted it. He gave dainty morsels of food to the lumbering porcupines, who rustled up to his doorway with their quills laid neatly down on their backs—for they knew that he was not an enemy, and so did not prepare themselves for defense when they saw him.

Every one spoke of him as "the old man of the meadow," but there was something about him that compelled respect, even from rough guides and half-breed trappers. Eccen-

tric they undoubtedly thought him. But there was in his face a gentleness and a high repose that made them wonder at him even while they smiled at his love for the things of out-of-doors.

Around his cabin the old gentleman planted a little garden. And many things grew therein that would not thrive under better conditions and under scientific treatment. It was as if all Nature knew of the friendship that was in his heart, and gave to him her choicest treasures.

He transplanted violets and twinflowers to bloom around his door. He brought thorn-berry bushes from the river's edge so that the partridges and grouse might feed on the red berries that they loved, and be free from any thought of danger.

In the winter-time, when the snow spread a fresh, clean blanket over the ragged one of leaves that the autumn had left, the old man of the meadow would go through the woods, tapping the snow crust here and there to find imprisoned partridges. And many were the brown birds that he rescued so; for, thinking

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to find warmth and shelter in the soft snow, they would often be caught by the heavy crust which froze over them during the night. Many times he found them stiff with cold and very near to dying, but he always took them to his cabin, warmed them and fed them, and some of them stayed near at hand in the meadow and were his guests for the rest of the winter.

All the hunters and trappers who came that way knew the kindly face of the old man who dwelt in the tiny cabin in the meadow, but few of them could say truthfully that they had spoken with him. If they were in need of food and shelter, he offered it courteously, but to those who came into the woods with a gun, or to set traps for the wild things he loved, he would not talk. He would only feed and shelter them and send them on their way.

Old Indian Margaret, of the Micmac tribe, was his friend. She it was who knew the secret of the herbs of the woods, and could cure by potent mixtures of brewed leaves many ailments of man and beast.

Because she came down the river and into the woods to gather roots and healing herbs, the old man of the meadow spoke to her, took her into his confidence somewhat, and learned from her of the natural medicines the forest is ready to give those who have quick eyes and a willing heart.

And she it was who told the Cap'n of the lady deer, then a very young deer not yet mated, whom the old man of the meadow had found in the woods, near to death by reason of a gunshot that had inflicted an unhealing wound.

He took the little, buff-colored deer to his cabin, tended her until the fever went out of her glazed eyes, pried the bullet loose from the festering flesh, and salved the wound with a cool mixture he had learned from Indian Margaret. When the deer was well, she stayed in the meadow and would follow him through the woods, picking her way daintily over the rocks in the trail, as noiselessly as if she were treading air instead of earth.

Then the little lady deer went into the woods, mated, and did not come back to the

cabin in the meadow for a season. But she did come back at last, with a tiny fawn who had very long legs and bumpy knees that wobbled when he walked. He was her first son, and she was vastly proud of him.

The old man was glad to see them and made them royally welcome, giving them many dainties to eat that they had never found in the woods. So the two of them stayed near him, and when he walked over the old, ragged trail, the lady deer went with him, followed by the tiny fawn who frisked in the leaves and delighted in making absurdly long leaps on his spindling, slender legs. Sometimes during the day the lady deer went roaming in the woods with her baby, but at sunset they always came back to the meadow and to the kindly hand that dispensed food and caresses.

One night, said the Cap'n, there came a fearful storm, a hurricane of driving wind, of lightning that smote the breast of the earth like a sword in the hand of an avenging spirit, of beating rain.

And the next day, he thought of the old man of the meadow and was moved to paddle

down the river in his canoe and see if all was well with him. It was at sunset that he came, and he thought to see the lady deer and her baby beside the cabin door. But they were nowhere to be seen, and the little cabin was empty. Empty, and with an oil lamp burning smokily, as if it had been burning all the night before.

Then the Cap'n was afraid that somehow in the storm the old man had come to grief. He lifted his voice and called, once, twice—and from somewhere far back in the woods he heard a faint answer. Only the ears of a woodsman would have caught the tone, so faint it was, and so far away. Straight through the woods he went to the faint voice, stopping now and then to call.

And at last, while the sunset rays of red and gold crept through the network of leaves and branches, he came upon the old gentleman, his gentle face tortured with pain, his body pinned to the ground by a tree which had fallen across him. Beside him, standing trembling and with pitiful, luminous eyes, was the lady deer who loved him and who had stayed with him.

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The tiny fawn nuzzled discontentedly against her, for she had no thought of him.

While the Cap'n tugged mightily at the fallen tree, the old man spoke feebly, telling how he had come into his sad plight. The night before, he said, through the whipping of the wind and the tumult of the thunder, he had been conscious that some wild thing was outside the cabin door, praying for his attention. It was the little lady deer. And her fawn was not with her. She came to his hand, then leaped away, and returned, her eyes shining blue-green in the darkness. He knew that she was imploring his aid. So he lighted a lantern and followed her into the woods; followed while the jagged lightning tore the sky to shreds and the thunder split the darkness with its heavy roaring.

Straight to her baby, the lady deer guided him, to the little fawn whose spindling hind legs had been caught fast between two saplings, and who lay partially on his side, breathing heavily, and with wide, frightened eyes because of the menace of the storm and the absence of his mother.

The old man of the meadow, buffeted by the fierce wind and the lashing of branches suddenly gone mad with the fury of the storm, bent and released the baby deer, who limped to his mother's side for consolation. Then came a lightning flash, a crash of splitting thunder, and a tree fell upon him, holding him there, dazed and hurt, through the long, wild night.

The lady deer, he said, had not left him; even when day came, she had not nibbled at leaves or at grass, but had stayed near, trembling, sometimes putting her soft nose against his face as if to ask why he stayed so long from home.

The Cap'n carried the old man of the meadow back to the little log cabin in his arms, and the lady deer followed hesitatingly, because of the strange presence, yet faithfully, because of the friend she loved, the friend who had come at her call to save her baby from death.

"He died in my arms," said the Cap'n slowly, "before I could reach the cabin. . . ."

The camp-fire had burned down to glowing

embers that brightened into blue whiteness, then sank to dull red. Only a few sparks now were tossing upward toward the stars, and over the tree tops that hummed gently to themselves, I saw Altair, the Star of the Eagle, winging his way across the sparkling sky. It was very late.

I was staring into the fire, but I knew that the Cap'n was looking at me with a strange, almost troubled expression in his eyes.

"The deer come into the meadow almost every evening," he said. "Indian Margaret said she saw *him* there once, but, of course, I thought—"

I did not answer. I could not. I was thinking that few would believe or understand; that wherever I told the story there would be incredulous smiles and ironic stares. Yet somehow my heart was singing. For the old man of the meadow had smiled at me. And no matter what others may say, I think it was because he knew that I, too, loved the wild things of the woods, and for that sunset in the meadow I am glad.

WHERE THE DEATH PLANT GREW

OUR camp lay in a circle of sunshine, and around it the oaks and beeches locked arms. There were a great many young birches, too, that stood like prim, slender children, all with their faces nicely washed and their slim bodies dusted with talcum powder. At night they were outlined wanly against the blackness of the dense foliage, like the ghosts of little trees cut down in their youth who came back to the place they loved. Around us in every direction the woods stretched out in vistas of light and shadow. The oaks and maples, touched by the fiery finger of the frost, blazed into crimson and scarlet, putting to shame the somber hemlocks that the richness of autumn did not transform. The huckleberry bushes gleamed redly against the darkness of the pine trees, like roses on the robes of a nun. And through the maze of greenery and autumn splendor, the

poplars burned with a clear, yellow flame, like tapers in a pagan temple.

There was in the air a fragrance so sweet that it seemed as if flowers must be hiding somewhere about—the rich odor of balsam and spruce, the wet, crushed smell of deep, cool moss, the half-fragrance of leaves newly fallen. And deep within the forest there, I found a little spring, and a pool where red and yellow leaves floated on the water like fairy boats. It was here that I met again the lady deer and her children, the same trio that I had seen at sunset in the meadow. It was here, too, that I first saw the Death Plant.

I had been lying on the moss near the pool, listening to the forest sounds. A hermit thrush was calling from somewhere in the dim mystery of leaves and interlaced branches, his note like a small, clear bell, a bell of silver tapped with a silver wand. Nearer at hand a chipmunk was racing over the branches of an oak tree, pausing now and then to scold a brown squirrel who was jerking his way down the trunk upside down like a mechanical toy, his cheeks stuffed to unmannerly fulness with

acorns. Sometimes I heard the sharp, raucous note of a bluejay, followed by the hollow "Clap, clap" of a raven earnestly bent on lunch. And once, from the far distance, over toward the lake, came the faint, hoarse cry of the blue heron.

Then suddenly I heard the delicate stirring of leaves as if some woods creatures were passing through. Quietly I turned my head and saw them—the lady deer, the yearling buck who was her eldest son, and the baby fawn, child of this season. They were coming toward the pool to drink, and I held myself still so that they could not see me and take alarm. The lady deer drank deeply and with little, satisfied gurglings, but the yearling buck drank more lightly and seemed to be uneasy. He did not see me, nor yet did he scent my presence, for I was up the wind, and there was a light breeze blowing. But somehow he knew, for he moved off a little way into the ferns and stood with ears cocked attentively, waiting for his mother to finish. The baby fawn was not concerned with drinking water as yet. But he liked the feeling of

the rippling coolness over his nostrils, and he waded into the pool a little way, dipping his small, brown nose deeply into the topaz-colored water. The little fairy boats of red and yellow leaves brushed against his small, slender legs, and the lady deer looked on comfortably and lovingly. I suspected that the baby fawn was sadly spoiled.

The yearling buck had bent his head to nibble at some grass shoots, but all at once I heard him snort, as if he had come upon something not to his liking. The lady deer turned her head, and I raised myself carefully to see what it was that he had found. It was too far to see clearly, but I made out what seemed to be a single white stalk, curved a little at the top, standing up from a bank of moss.

I had moved carefully, but with a slight scraping of leaves. Instantly the yearling buck was in a panic and made for the protecting shadows of the deeper woods, uttering his frightened, wheezy, "Heh, heh!" His white tail was like a dot of snow.

The lady deer stood still, her head raised, her dark eyes fixed upon me attentively. It

was as if, before flight, she wished to be sure that I was an enemy. The little fawn merely trotted out of the pool, his wisp of a tail twitching, and stood against her side, looking at me with babyish curiosity. I was, I think, the first human he had ever seen. He was far more curious than afraid.

I wanted to tell the lady deer that she need have no fear of me, that I had no thought of evil in my heart concerning her or her children. I wanted to tell her that I would gladly be her friend, even as the Old Gentleman of the Meadow had been her friend. But I was silent, for she would have taken fright at the sound of my voice. I could only send my thoughts out to her, hoping that in some mysterious way she would recognize me as a friend and not as a foe. And as if she had indeed sensed my good-will toward her, she bent her head to her baby, nuzzled his velvety, soft neck, and then, slowly and without concern, moved away into the lacy shrubbery of the hazelnut bushes with the little fawn trotting by her side.

I was curious, when they had gone, to know

what it was the yearling buck had found and why he had snorted as if in distrust. So I made my way through the ferns and huckleberry bushes to the other side of the pool, and there, waxen white against the dark green moss, I came upon a slim, leafless stalk topped with a pallid bloom that was curved and shaped like a small pipe.

There was something bloodless and corpse-like about it, and it seemed strange that a flower should be so coldly pale when all around it was warmth and brightness. I picked it carefully, for I wanted to show it to the Cap'n and have him tell me its name. But almost before I had risen from the moss where I knelt, the ghostly flower in my hand turned a sooty black.

Somehow I wished I had not picked it. For there were still left in my heart some of the beliefs of childhood. If Brother and I had come on such a thing in our woods by the bay, out in the West, we would have called it an omen of evil portent. Though I would not drop the flower, I was afraid of it, and hurried back to the camp with the dark, waxen bloom.

The Cap'n smiled when I showed him the flower and told him how it had faded in my hand, but I thought that he, too, wished I had not plucked it. For those who live close to the out-of-doors become imbued somehow with its symbolism. He would have denied this. And yet I think it is true.

"It is an Indian pipe," he said, "an orchid that one rarely finds in these woods. The Micmac Indians call it the Death Plant."

Then he told me how the flower was a vampire plant that sucked the life and substance from the roots of other plants that were luckless enough to grow near it. How it had no leaves because it took no nourishment from the air; how its pallor was indeed that of the dead, since it had no life of its own, taking its toll from the healthy, hard-working herbs and flowers around it.

So much the Cap'n told me. But his daughter, whom I called the Woods Girl, because she had grown up in the forest, told me more of the curious plant, and a story concerning it which she knew to be true.

The Indians, she said, have a legend about

the flower. They say that it was once a lovely blossom of pink on a delicate stem that sent out lustrous, green leaves to take the food that the air gives to plants. But since it was so fair, it became lazy and rebelled at the incessant labor of gathering nourishment from the air and from the earth. So it fastened its roots on the roots of other plants and sucked from them the good they had gathered. The Great Spirit, seeing this, was moved to anger and took from the robber flower all its delicate coloring, leaving it gaunt and ghostly white.

The Indians say that when the Death Plant is picked, it turns black in dark remorse for its wrong-doing. But it is not safe to pluck it, for he who does so is in danger of death. And in proof of this, the Woods Girl told me the story of Indian Margaret, and the man of science whose heart was cruel.

Indian Margaret was so old that she did not know her age. In the far-away days of her youth she had been a medicine woman of the Micmac tribe, and even now that she was wrinkled of face as a dried apple, she had not forgotten her skill at curing the ills of

man and beast—nor her skill at what she called the casting of spells.

Once, when an epidemic of a dread disease threatened to work havoc in the little Nova Scotia village where she lived, Indian Margaret ministered to the sick with tea brewed from herbs, and made poultices of ground roots. Those whom she tended recovered, even though the white doctors mocked at her strange, primitive remedies.

Once a man caught her fishing for salmon in the season when the law forbade it. He told the authorities of it, not knowing that an Indian may fish at any time. Indian Margaret suffered nothing from the law, but she was angered that the man should have been so treacherous. For he, too, had been fishing.

"I fixum," she said laconically, and proceeded to make a "spell" in the privacy of her shabby hut.

For three years thereafter the man caught not one fish, though before, he had been a fisherman of renown. It was only when the old medicine woman died that his rod and reel resumed their former cunning.

There came to the village then a scientist, a foreigner, who wished to study the beasts and flowers of the northland. He had money in plenty, so he built for himself a laboratory stocked with many curiously shaped bottles and retorts. There was in that room which few entered a slab of marble with clamps and buckles and straps affixed to it. Rumor had it that there was often blood on that slab, and that the scientist was one of those who seek Nature's secrets in the bared hearts of animals strapped tightly down under a knife. Many were the stray kittens and homeless dogs that went into the room with the marble slab, and they were never seen again. The villagers grew to hate the man and to be afraid of him. The animals they loved were guarded carefully when he went by. For in the interest of science he recognized no property rights.

Now, Indian Margaret loved all things that were dumb and helpless. All the children in the village knew of her kindly interest, and when their pets were hurt or sick, they took them to the old Micmac woman, who made them well again. Her hut, though bare and

comfortless, was a refuge for all four-footed creatures in distress. Sometimes trappers and hunters brought baby wild things to her, and she cared for them until they could go back into the forest and earn their own living.

There was a little rabbit whom Indian Margaret loved, a little rabbit with a broken leg that some one had caught in the woods and brought to the Micmac woman's hut. She set the bone and bound it carefully, and when the baby rabbit found that his hurt was eased, he grew to love Indian Margaret and to depend on her. Neither was he afraid of other people, for her kindness had given him confidence in all other humans.

One day, while old Margaret was in the woods picking herbs and gathering roots for medicinal teas, the man of science came by her hut, and saw the baby rabbit, still with his hind leg in a bandage, nibbling at the grass blades around the door. When the man approached him, the little rabbit did not hop away, but sat up primly, with his soft forepaws over his white, furry stomach, his ears standing straight as masts, and in his soft,

brown eyes was no fear of the hand that reached for him.

Some one remembered afterward that he had seen a man stooping by the door of Indian Margaret's hut. He told her this when she went inquiring about the little rabbit whose hurt she was trying to heal.

She did not go to the house with the laboratory near by. She knew it would be of no use. She only stared fixedly for a moment, then her squinty, black eyes narrowed.

"I fixum," she promised simply.

It was some time after this that Indian Margaret, quite as if by accident, met the man of science and asked him if he knew the flower called Indian pipe. He knew the orchid, of course, but had no specimen, and Margaret offered to guide him to where one grew.

He went with her into the woods, a tin box with air-holes slung over his shoulder. And she was patient while he gathered different kinds of moss and placed them in the specimen box. There was no hurry, said Indian Margaret.

Into the deep woods she led him, past a bog

where the moose tracks were cloven deeply into the soft, yielding turf, farther back into the green thicket, where the sunlight came only in mottled patches. And there, in the midst of a mossy circle, bloomed the waxen orchid, with its drooping pipe bowl and its ghostly, leafless stem.

She pointed, and he went forward to pick it. But even as his fingers closed about the bloodless stem, there was a crash of slender branches giving way, a cry, and the man with his tin specimen box sank from sight, engulfed in moss and leaves and branches.

Indian Margaret came to the edge of the pit and looked down at him. He lay there at the bottom of the old trap that for years had been used by the Micmacs to snare moose and deer. He was groaning, and it was improbable that he could climb out, for the sides were made of sharpened stakes pointing downward.

The old medicine woman looked down at him without pity, without triumph. She only stared at him and remarked, "You got um Death Plant."

Then she came away, and for a day and a

night the man of science writhed and called and tried to climb out of the trap where many a moose had come to death. At last he did climb out and reached the village, torn and dirty, with scarcely strength enough to speak.

He accused Indian Margaret of deliberately seeking his destruction, but there was no proof, and he was not liked in the village. So he went away soon after, leaving his house and laboratory, and one night it burned to the ground. No one knew how the fire started.

This was the story that the Woods Girl told to me.

The animals were afraid of the Death Plant, she said, because many times it bloomed over hidden pitfalls, where decayed wood or a scant matting of leaves gave it sustenance. That was why, she thought, the yearling buck had snorted and drawn back. He was afraid of lurking danger there.

Many times after that I went back into the forest to lie beside the pool with its fairy boats of red and yellow leaves. And sometimes I saw the lady deer and her children. It seemed to me that she was no longer afraid, knowing

that I had only kindly thoughts toward her and her babies. But the yearling buck was never reconciled to the strange whim by which his mother came to the pool and drank in the presence of a human being. He always stood well away from the spring, his whole body tense, his eyes wide with distrust, ready at the slightest move to dash off into the woods uttering his startled "Heh, heh, heh!"

One day I went far beyond the spring, following an old moose path—went all alone, though the Cap'n had told me not to. It was very quiet and fragrant there, as if the very wind had fallen asleep in the midst of the flickering lights and shadows.

My footsteps made no sound as I walked along, for soft moss carpeted the almost indistinguishable trail, and twinflower vines ran in riotous filigree over the green cushions. Before me lay a little clearing, half hidden from view by tall wild asters that were like fringed bits of sky, and after that the shadowy recesses of the farther forest stretched as far as the eye could reach. I would have made my way through the screen of aster stems, but

suddenly there was the light crackle of twigs, the soft, spraying sound of leafy branches as some woods creature passed through. Then directly in front of me, only a few feet away, trampling down the fringed flowers, was the lady deer, with the tiny fawn and the yearling buck close at her side. Her eyes were luminous even in the daylight, with strange, blue lights, and it seemed to me that she was trembling. I stopped, a little startled by the suddenness of her appearance. And in the same instant she dashed across the moose path, uttering that startled, warning note I had heard before. She was gone, like a shadow, with her children leaping after her, and there was only the faint crashing of bushes to mark their going.

I stood still, puzzled. I felt sure that she had not been afraid of me, for she had seemed to cross my path deliberately. It was in my mind that some savage animal was pursuing her; that mayhap a bear or a wildcat was on her trail. I listened, but heard no sound.

Slowly I went through the parted screen of wild asters, but there I stopped, held by

a sudden, unreasoning fear. For directly ahead of me—in the little clearing, only a few steps away—I saw the strange, ghostly stalk of the Death Plant, with its drooping bowl swaying ever so gently in the breeze.

Somehow the woods seemed to hold a menace. I turned toward the camp and was glad when I saw the white gleam of our tents once more. The Cap'n rated me soundly when I told him of my wanderings; grew thoughtful, too, when I spoke of the lady deer and her note of warning.

"The ground beyond the spring is honey-combed with old moose pits," he said finally. "The animals know of them and keep away. She knew there was danger there."

"I wonder," I said musingly, "if the lady deer was trying to tell me."

The Cap'n laughed. "No doubt," he said jokingly, "she's attached herself to you in the capacity of guardian angel."

The Cap'n declared it was only a fortunate coincidence. Doubtless he was right, but even so, I am grateful to the lady deer. I wish that she could know.

HELD IN TRUST

WE first saw Mac ahead of us on the trail as we were on our way to the Three-Mile Bog, where the Cap'n hoped to call up a moose for me to see. He was a tall, loose-jointed fellow, who swung along easily and who covered a great deal of ground with his long strides. He walked in the flat-footed way that out-of-doors men acquire, and a rifle hung in the crotch of his arm.

The Cap'n chuckled as he saw him. "Mac is hunting again—for the sake of appearances," he told me in a low tone. "He goes out every year at the beginning of the moose season, and again when the partridge season opens. But he never gets anything."

"A poor shot?" I hazarded, but the Cap'n grinned.

"I don't think he ever took a shot at any

living thing in all his life. He goes out bravely enough, and talks big about how much game he's going to get this time, but when he comes back he always says the same thing: 'Oh, I saw a young bull moose, but he looked kind of nice standing against the green of the woods. I didn't like to take a shot at him.' Or, 'Yes, I saw plenty of grouse, but say, there was a little lady grouse who wasn't no more afraid of me than if she'd been a chicken. I didn't like to shoot at her.' And he always comes home empty-handed."

The Cap'n chuckled again, wickedly. "I'm going to invite him to go moose-calling with us," he whispered, "and you listen to his alibi."

He raised his voice in a shout, and Mac turned on the trail and waited until we came up to him. He had a brown face with blue-gray eyes, and though his mouth was set in a straight line that spoke of sternness, I knew, when I saw his eyes, that they were too kind ever to look along a rifle's length.

He smiled rather sheepishly at the Cap'n, because he suspected that he was being laughed at.

"Yes, I'm out for moose," he said in response to the Cap'n's question.

"Fine!" came the hearty response. "We're on our way over to the Three-Mile Bog now. I'll call one up, and you can knock him down."

He exhibited to Mac, with no little pride, the long horn of birch-bark through which he hoped to call a moose from the protecting shadows of the woods into the open spaces of the bog.

But Mac shifted the gun awkwardly to his other arm and seemed in no way eager to accompany us. "Well, I'll tell you," he said at last, "I didn't think I'd shoot any moose t'day—fact is, I'm after partridges."

The Cap'n winked at me shamelessly. "Seen any moose?" he queried.

Again Mac hesitated. "Well, yes, I seen a cow with a yearling calf just yesterday, up by Indian Gardens—but of course you ain't allowed to shoot cows or calves—and they sure did look nice together. Say, that lady was so proud of her baby—he looked right handsome to her, even if he did have knock-knees and ears too big for him."

"Well, anyway, Mac," said the Cap'n approvingly, "you have a good time in the woods even if you don't kill things. Sometimes I think it's better to make friends with the woods creatures than it is to shoot them."

"Ye-s-s," acquiesced Mac in an uncertain tone, then spoke rapidly, a little embarrassed. "Say, could I come up to your camp t'night and talk something over with you? It's about—a—a wild thing, and I sure need advice."

"Of course you can come," answered the Cap'n heartily, and Mac grinned with relief.

"I sure need somebody's advice," he said earnestly.

We left Mac on the main trail and turned off on the corduroy road that led to Three-Mile Bog. As we swung along the uneven path, the Cap'n related to me a little adventure that Mac had had with wild creatures. He chuckled a great deal as he told it.

Not long before, Mac had captured in some way a mother fox with eight tiny cubs. His explanation to the neighbors was that he would raise the foxes, breed them, and sell them or their pelts. The neighbors knew better, for

they knew Mac. And when an offer would be made for one of the bodies of his nine foxes, he would pretend that it was too little or that it was not the right time for killing.

Now the mother fox was discontented and spent her time racing back and forth in the cage, trying to escape. One night she burrowed a hole underneath the wire meshes and went back to the woods whence she had come. The eight babies were thrown utterly on Mac's kindly care, and he assumed the responsibility, though with difficulty. For it is no easy task to feed eight hungry and healthy gray foxes, even though they are in captivity.

They came to love him dearly and would scurry about his feet like small, quick dogs when he came into the cage. But they proved to be too great a problem even for Mac's sturdy heart. So one night he opened the door of the cage, and out they went, scampering away into the shadows like so many leaves blown by the wind.

The next morning a neighbor came to him irately to say that one of Mac's foxes had robbed his hen roost and had killed a fine,

young pullet. Mac expressed his regret, but denied the man's demand that he should pay for the dead fowl. For, said Mac, he had set the foxes free. They were his no longer, hence his was not the responsibility.

That night he heard a great commotion outside the empty cage. With a lantern he went out and found there, by the closed door of the wire enclosure, eight small foxes, all looking eagerly toward the door of their accustomed home. One carried in his mouth a young cockerel, filched from a neighbor's hen-house, and two others had telltale feathers hanging from their mouths.

Mac let them in, accepted dubiously their wild demonstrations of joy at seeing him once more, and went over to the neighbor's house to pay for the pullet.

"He said," chuckled the Cap'n, "that he guessed they belonged to him after all."

The next morning, with the aid of another man, he put the foxes into bags and took them twelve miles into the woods. There they released them, and the little foxes scurried away as if bidding civilization good-by forever.

But that night the eight small, gray foxes were home before him, this time snugly in the cage, for the door had been left open. And they raised bright, friendly eyes when he looked down upon them in astonishment. He counted them carefully. Not one was missing.

"And so," finished the Cap'n, "Mac has those eight ravenous fox cubs on his hands. He won't kill 'em, and won't sell 'em to be killed. His alibi is that he's going to make a fortune by breeding them."

It was almost sunset by the time we reached Three-Mile Bog, and the wind was making little, drowsy noises through the tree tops. The tree-toads had commenced their plaintive, frightened cry, and the air was losing its warm glow. Across the flushed expanse of the western sky a lanky heron was flying, his legs trailing out behind him in a thin, dark line. A squirrel was chattering somewhere within the woods that bordered the trail, and the silence that followed the giddy fusillade of sound was sharp and almost reproachful. It was as if the day had been disturbed in its desire for sleep.

On the edge of the bog we stopped and hid ourselves behind a screen of huckleberry bushes. The wide, level space was dotted with turf cushions between which were soft, moist patches. Many tracks of moose were there, the great, cloven imprint of their hoofs sunk deep in the yielding sod. The tinted autumn trees enclosed the field in a phalanx of soft color, and low bushes of flaming red made splotches of blood-color on the dull-green surface.

To his lips the Cap'n put the horn of birch-bark and sounded the cajoling, pleading note of the moose cow who would bring a lover to her side. The call, according to human ears, was not lovely. It commenced on a high note and sank grotesquely to a nasal drawl. But in the silence of coming evening it thrilled me. For the call sped across the bog, into the deepening shadows of the woods, and faintly, from far away, we heard its echo, again and again, fainter, sweeter, until distance made it mysterious and beautiful, like a well-loved memory.

For many moments there was silence. There was only the soft shuddering of leaves and

the plaintive cry of the tree-toads. Then from far away the call was answered, note for note, slanting downward from the high pinnacle of sound to the absurd, low-toned drawl.

"Oh!" I whispered, shaking with excitement, "is it a bull?"

The Cap'n's face expressed mirth and a little annoyance. "No, a cow," he whispered back, for sound carries unbelievably to the great, sensitive ears of the moose. "A bull is there, but Mrs. Cow is with him and is answering her supposed rival. She won't let him come if she can help it."

Again he raised the birch-bark horn to his lips, and again came the cajoling call, more insistent and more coaxing.

Came the answering call of the moose cow, nearer at hand, and with a threatening note that spoke ill for the rival who thought to win her lord away from her. It came once more, that curious arpeggio of vibrant, nasal tones—but it was broken sharply, and I caught my breath.

For from the same direction there came a savage shriek, and suddenly we heard the

crashing of branches that told us that the bull and the cow had fled.

"What was it?" I asked half aloud, for the thumping of my heart seemed deafening.

"A wildcat," said the Cap'n. "The bull and the cow evidently came too near his lair, and he attacked them. We may as well go back to camp. There'll be no more moose tonight."

The evening shadows clustered thickly around us as we hurried back along the trail to the camp. The dew had fallen, and the spruce trees and hemlocks were breathing forth their wet fragrance. It was very dark there in the woods, and the Cap'n talked of wildcats, of their ferocity and savagery of spirit.

"That's one animal of the north woods that can't be tamed," he told me. "They know nothing of affection, and they hate human beings."

I wanted to tell him that I had known a wildcat once, back in my own woods on Puget Sound—known him very slightly, it is true, but enough to make me believe that he would have been friendly in time. But the shadows

that crept upon us, and covered the trail before our footsteps, checked all speech. In the east was a white glow that heralded the rising of the moon. The stars were bright as sword points. And far in the north faint streamers of light shot up towards the zenith, wavered, and died away—the Northern Lights, that the Indians call “spirit fire.”

Later, when the camp-fire’s ruddy gleam made a magic circle of warmth and comfort into which the sharp cold of the autumn night could not penetrate, Mac came out of the blackness of the woods and entered the magic circle of firelight. For a time we sat silent, watching the shadows that danced on the trees, the flaring, blue light of the pine logs, the ruddy intensity of the birch-wood’s flame. The smoke circled about us, pungent with the fragrance of hemlock and spruce gum. The sparks shook themselves free from the imprisoning branches and soared upward, like fireflies, to lose themselves in the immensity of the star-studded sky.

“Well, Mac,” said the Cap’n at last, “how are the foxes getting along?”

Mac stirred uneasily and grinned. "The mother came back th' other night," he drawled, "so now the fam'ly is all t'gether again."

"Oh," nodded the Cap'n, "so that's what is on your mind?"

The woodsman shook his head. Then he ceased his staring at the fire and looked out into the velvety darkness of the night.

"Back in town," he said slowly, "I have a wildcat cub, half grown. I keep him in a pen, but he gets out sometimes and kills chickens. I tried letting him loose, but he came back to me. The neighbors don't like him, and they don't see why I keep him. They want me to kill him—and I can't."

The Cap'n and I looked at each other in silence.

Then he spoke judicially. "It seems very simple, Mac. Let some one else kill him."

But Mac shook his head. "Somehow I can't," he said sadly yet definitely. "He's sort of—well, sort of a trust. It was this way—"

Then he told us the story of Jamie, the wildcat cub, the young savage of the woods who

snarled and screeched and chewed at the stout wires of his cage, yet who whined with joy when his master came; who, at a word from Mac, flung himself against the meshes and rolled with delight. As he spoke, the moon began to glimmer in broken iridescence through the laced branches. The tops of the higher trees caught its pale light and swathed themselves in it like a veil. But still in the lower branches there was darkness, darkness and the dancing shadows of the fire.

It had been a year ago in the spring that Mac had first seen Jamie's mother, the lady wildcat whom he called Nellie. There was a spring deep in the woods, where he often went when "hunting." It was in a cool grotto cut by nature's tools far back into a rocky wall. A little waterfall trickled down the face of the rock musically, soothingly, tickling the fingers of fern fronds that reached out to it, and came to rest in a cup of hollowed-out stone. On all sides the woods hemmed it in, as if jealous of its cool prettiness. And here it was that Mac, lying down to sleep, woke to find himself not alone—a lady wildcat was drinking at the

hollowed-out cup, crouched lithely, with her shoulders making furry humps back of her head, her red tongue lapping contentedly at the clear water.

She must have seen him there, while he slept, but she was too fearless to go away with her thirst unsatisfied because of a human being. When he raised his head, she laid back her pointed ears, lifted her tawny lip in a hissing snarl, and her amber eyes stared at him warningly. But there was something in her attitude that told Mac that she came in peace and would respect a truce unless he chose to be hostile. So he lay quietly, watching her, and though his gun was close to his hand, he did not reach for it, even after she finished drinking and padded away into the greenery of the woods.

"She had babies, you see," was his excuse, "and it would have been sort of mean to shoot their mother when they needed her."

Now on the next day Mac came quite by chance on the lair of the lady wildcat and saw her in her home. In the same rocky wall that sheltered the little spring, he came upon

a jutting ledge, no higher than his head, with a shallow depression in the wall that served as a shelter against rain and snow. The sunlight slanted down on the slab of rock that was the lady wildcat's porch, and she was lying there, with her babies playing around her.

"They were prettier than some human children I've seen," said Mac. "Cute little fellows, soft and furry-looking, with great, big gray eyes and paws a whole lot too large for them. They chased each other from one side of the ledge to the other, rolled and tumbled, and growled in high-pitched little voices—and say, she was proud of them! She lay there blinking sort of sleepily, yet keeping an eye on the kids, you could see, and when they tumbled against her, she'd give them a good-natured tap with her paw just as if to keep the fun going."

So intent was the lady wildcat on the play of her children, that she did not know of Mac's presence near at hand. But suddenly she raised her head and gave a sniffing whine. Instantly the babies were on the alert, looking over toward the woods away from where he

stood. From the dense underbrush there came a tawny male wildcat with a dead rabbit hanging limply in his mouth. He came on at an easy, swinging gait, leaped up to the ledge as briskly as if it had been only a foot in height, and deposited his burden of food before the lady of the lair. She herself did not taste the morsel he had brought to her. With her paw she shoved it toward her children, and they fell on it savagely, ears laid back, and their growls this time were earnest and intense.

The mother watched the babies at their feast with inscrutable amber eyes, but the father had caught a scent that he did not fancy. He stood with his head upraised and his tail twitching uneasily. Then he saw Mac. His ears went flat back on his tawny head, and he uttered a hiss that rose in volume until it was a savage, menacing shriek.

Instantly the mother leaped to attention. With one blow of her paw she sent the frightened cubs scurrying into the shallow cave, and faced the woods, ready to fight whatever enemy might appear.

"I left," said Mac simply. "I didn't want

to disturb the old gentleman, and I didn't want him to disturb me. So I just went away quietly, and he never came after me. I think she must have told him that I was harmless, and not to bother."

One might think, Mac continued, that he would have stayed away after that. A wildcat lair in the deep woods is not a safe place for a human being to frequent. But he did go, again and again, and twice he took a brook trout for the wildcat children and tossed it up on the ledge while she and the gentleman of the lair were away hunting food. Once she came back, he said, while the cubs were still growling over the fish, and she smelled it suspiciously, recognizing the human scent about it.

"I was standing behind a tree, watching her," Mac said, "and she caught a glimpse of me. She snarled just from force of habit, then she lay down and closed her eyes, as much as to say: 'Oh, it's you, is it? I reckon you don't mean no harm.'"

Then came the summer, and hot days when the woods were dry, when fire was an ever-

present menace. Mac was on a fishing trip and had camped at the river's edge. But he had wandered far into the woods, as was his custom, to drink at the little spring, to have a look at the wildcat family on the rocky ledge. The day was oppressively hot, and there was the smell of smoke in the air, for there had been forest fires not far away. The drowsiness of the heat crept upon him, and he slept there by the spring, in the cool grotto where the water trickled over the rock and down into the hollowed-out cup. He was awakened by the sinister crackle of flames licking along dried limbs and clambering up hemlock trunks. He leaped to his feet and stood dismayed. For all about him the woods were aflame. Fire was creeping like a glowing serpent over the dried leaves on the ground, sucking them in, reaching up to grasp at huckleberry bushes and thorn trees; sweeping up the trunks of pines and spruce trees, leaping from branch to branch, roaring in an abandon of destruction—

The hot flames scorched his face, and the smoke, blown in stifling hot eddies, drove him

back into the meager shelter of the grotto. He threw himself flat on the ground and buried his face in the coolness of the spring. He dashed the water over his body, trying to shield it from the falling sparks and flaming cinders blown by the wind. In the brief moments when he raised his face from the hollowed-out cup, trying to catch a breath of air for his aching lungs, he saw wild things of the woods rushing past him, utterly terror-stricken, blind with panic, crazed by pain. A rabbit leaped past him with brown fur that was singed by the flames. It stopped irresolutely, turned, and with the fierce roaring of the flames close before it, hopped back into the smoking underbrush.

Two deer dashed past the grotto, their eyes wide with fright, straight into the burning woods, heading, as he knew, for the river, where there was safety. Bevvies of bewildered partridges trooped past, cheeping plaintively, and at his very feet a little hermit thrush circled and fell with one wing burned off. It died, gasping there.

All thought of escape left him, Mac said.

The heat became more intolerable. Burning brands fell on him, smoking, sizzling on his wet clothing, boring through to the skin. The smoke filled the air with a thick, gray haze, and his breath came in panting sobs. The only instinct left was to keep his face in the cool water, to draw his body as far into the grotto as he could.

And then, as he lay face downward, he felt a heavy body cross him, and raising his head, he saw the lady wildcat. In her mouth she was carrying one of her cubs, and it was half dead from the smoke fumes. She herself was burned, and there was a long, raw scar across her shoulder where a blazing branch had fallen. Her eyes were glazed and almost unseeing, and she staggered panting against the shelter of the rocky wall.

"Then," said Mac, "she looked at me—*she knew me*. And when I rose to my knees, having some sort of a thought that she was going to attack me, she dropped the cub right in front of me and stood there for just an instant, looking me straight in the eye. It was as if she was asking me to mind the baby a

minute while she went for the other one. And she *did* go for the other little fellow, away over on that stone ledge of hers—she walked out into the flames just as if they weren't there—and she never came back.

"That's why, don't you see, I can't kill Jamie—he's sort of a trust. She asked me to take care of him—and I just had to."

There was a long silence then. I could not speak, and even the Cap'n had turned his head away. The moonlight had crept softly down the sleeping trees, had clothed them in dim, silver light, and the white birches gleamed like sentinel spears.

"Well," said Mac at last in an uncertain voice—I think he was afraid that we would laugh at him—"what do you think I ought to do? There's the neighbors to consider, of course, and some of these days he's going to be so big that a wire cage won't hold him."

"I'd trust that it will come out all right," I said. "Something will surely happen; it *must* happen. Because you must never be sorry for having kept faith with the mother-heart of the wildcat."

I spoke with unconscious prophecy. For when Mac returned to the little village where he lived, Jamie was gone. Grief and loneliness for the master he loved had made his captivity unendurable and had given strength to his young body. One night he had thrown himself against the wire enclosure, and it had given way. The sleeping neighbors were awakened by the crash. They heard a long cry of triumph—then there was silence. Jamie had padded away into the wilderness, never to return. And so the trust was kept inviolate.

FRIENDS OF A QUILL

ARNOLD, the porcupine, was suspicious of me at our first meeting. And I, it may as well be confessed, was none too sure of his intentions. For I had heard, ever since I was old enough to be told, stories of how porcupines throw their quills at passers-by, how they defend themselves by flinging the sharp, white daggers at their attackers, and how the quills are tipped with barbs that penetrate the skin and poison it. True, the Cap'n had told me that such stories were false. That the porcupine is not equipped with any such throwing apparatus, and that the quills loosen only when pulled, or when an attacking animal, overcome with courage, tries to seize the prickly one in its teeth. But just the same, when I came on Arnold by the edge of the lake called Yeaton, I was at a loss as to how to win his friendship—or whether, indeed, to try to win it at all.

He was the first porcupine I had ever seen, except behind the bars of a cage. And though I knew the Nova Scotia woods abounded with the small animals whom the Micmacs call "Very Many Pricks," I had not seen one on any of our excursions into the back country. It was just before sunset that I came upon him, he being peaceably engaged in nibbling grasses at the edge of the lake, and pausing at times to sip the cool, clear water. From a distance I could not clearly define the slow-moving bunch of upstanding bristles. I half expected him to turn out a beaver, or I should not have been surprised to find him a baby bear.

But when I finally crept upon him, using great boulders and young pine trees as screens to mask my coming, I was thrilled by surprise—and perhaps by a little of the foolish fear which lingered from the remembrance of tales concerning his vengeful quills.

In that same moment, he of the very many pricks saw me. And my distrust of him was equaled by his suspicion of me. For he set off, up the rocky beach, in the direction of

the woods, moving in an agitated, although stately manner, his fan of quills raised straight up from his body, his absurd, flat tail like a pancake turner dragging on the ground, his hind feet turned in toward each other like those of a bear. All the time he was ticking loudly, a noise which was intended to warn me that he was very, very dangerous and not to be trifled with under any circumstances. But his eyes blinked in rather a worried fashion. It was as if he knew his powers of defense were limited, and that I, if I wished, could easily take advantage of him and hurt him.

I easily kept pace with him as he trundled along, ticking at the top of his lungs, his quills rustling as they swept the stones and little bushes. It was in my mind then that I should like to have him for a friend. But there seemed no way to make it clear to him that my intentions would bear inspection.

If he had pursued a straight course up the beach and into the woods, I should have never become acquainted with him. For once there he would have climbed a fir tree and curled

up in a prickly, inhospitable ball. But so worried was Arnold, the porcupine, by my persistent company, that he turned aside from his regular path and sought shelter under a great boulder just at the edge of the wooded hill. The boulder was not the admirable hiding-place he hoped it would be. There was no kindly hole into which he could squirm out of sight. It did nothing, in fact, except block his passage effectively and give me the opportunity to sit down squarely in the path behind him. It was a trap, but it was a friendly one. I hoped that I could make him realize this in time. But for the first few minutes he did nothing but tick worriedly and rustle round and round the rocky circle, trying to find an exit. There was none. And he did not care to risk climbing over me. So he took refuge in watchful silence, every quill erect, and turned about, facing me, waiting for the attack he felt sure was coming.

I, too, sat silent, watching him, waiting until his alarm should subside. And indeed, it did not take so long as you might think until he let his quills down, little by little, until they

lay in a jagged, but peaceable bundle upon his back. His bright, black eyes blinked continually, and his soft nose worked feverishly, trying by the scent to establish what manner of person I was. It was then that I had an inspiration—and, what was better, the means by which to win his friendship. For in the pocket of my sweater was a small, spotty apple, somewhat the worse for wear, since it had been brought from a scraggly apple tree at Indian Gardens. I had carried it in my pockets for many days, giving it no thought except that some day, far from camp, it might serve as an emergency lunch. But now it became more than a shriveled apple; it became the key that unlocked the door of the prickly one's friendship.

Quietly I bit off a tiny piece and held it out toward Arnold. He backed up against the rock, ticked vigorously, raised his quills again, and there was a long, long wait. But his nose caught the unknown, delicious fragrance. His ticking died down to the merest formality of a warning. And at last, very slowly, with quills half standing on guard, he advanced

toward my outstretched hand and snatched at the morsel of apple. He ate it hurriedly, keeping me sharply in sight lest I should try to take the delicacy from him. But I tendered him another piece and still another. At the fourth helping, he so far forgot his fear that he took the chunk between his paws and sat up, using his flat tail as a sort of prop. Then he ate the apple as a squirrel would, turning it around, nibbling at it daintily, evidently enjoying it with all his simple, surprised soul. I was, I think, the first human he had ever seen, since the lake called Yeaton is far from the beaten path and is frequented only by hunters in the moose season. And it was, I am quite sure, the first apple he had ever tasted. It must have been a tremendous day for Arnold.

The Cap'n laughed when I told him of my new friend. He reminded me that an apple had caused a great deal of trouble in the past, and prophesied that it would be the undoing of Arnold. In this, I am sorry to say, he was not far wrong. And yet I cannot regret my gift to him. It made him very happy for a

time, and woods creatures do not have too much happiness in their fear-haunted lives.

Early the next morning I went back to the slanting boulder hoping that Arnold would still be there. For I had left some bits of apple that I hoped might endear the place to him. Nor was I disappointed. I found him there, curled into a round, prickly ball, and when he saw me he set up a vigorous ticking and erected his quills, quite as if he had not met me the day before and accepted the hospitality of my apple.

But I had not come empty-handed. I had brought another apple from our dwindling store, and some bits of flapjacks that I hoped might prove acceptable to Arnold's appetite. He sampled them obligingly, but without enthusiasm. It was only the apple that met his thorough approval. And by the time he had eaten it, he had accepted me along with the new delicacy. It was quite clear, from his intermittent tickings, that he was still at a loss to account for me, the apple, and my strange persistence in trying to make friends with him. But he was, I think, a bit of a philosopher.

What he could not reason out, he accepted gracefully. And on the afternoon of that day he let me put my hand on his soft nose and stroke it. I think he would have come up on my lap if I had tolled him with an apple. But I did not invite him. There are limits even to friendship.

Now the Cap'n told me something that day that saddened me. As we walked in the woods, he pointed to dead fir trees that stood like upright corpses in the midst of their green, living brethren. They had been killed by porcupines, he said, who barked them, little by little, until the trees could no longer depend on the protection for their sap with which nature has provided them, and so died. It was this excuse, he told me, that hunters used for killing the otherwise harmless porcupines. They shot them, clubbed them, tortured them with rocks. And the small, prickly ones, he said, cried like small children when they were thus tormented.

I wondered bitterly, as he told me of the cruelty called sport, what the hunters would have said to any one reproaching them for cutting down a tree—or a dozen trees—for

firewood, or because it blocked their passage in the woods; Arnold, my friend, and his kin of the very many pricks, nibbled at the bark because it was food. They did not destroy senselessly as humans do. And after all, there were so many trees in the great northern forest that I was sure the few killed by the porcupines would never be missed except by those determined upon finding an excuse for slaughter.

The Cap'n said that the Micmacs explained the porcupine's fondness for the bark of the pine and fir trees by a legend. Very Many Pricks, so the story goes, came to earth a long time after the other animals were created. At first he was smooth like a beaver. But so afraid was he of other animals, that he ran under a thorn bush, and some of the sharp spines clung to him and gave him protection. Still he was lonely. For the other animals, being now afraid of him, ran away when he came near them, and in all the world he could find no comrade or companion. But one day in the forest he saw a lonely little tree standing in an empty circle of larger trees. The porcu-

pine's heart leaped with joy when he saw it, for the little tree had no soft leaves; it had, instead, slender, green spines that grew in clumps upon its branches.

"There," said Very Many Pricks, "is my brother." And he trundled over to the pine tree, climbed into its branches, and curled up in a ball.

"Birds of a feather—" I quoted, quite in sympathy with the story.

"Friends of a quill," the Cap'n corrected me.

It was soon after this day that I conceived the idea of giving Arnold a farewell party. For the time of our departure was near at hand, and I knew that I should never see my friend again. I was sorry for this, because Arnold had come to look for my daily visits to his new home under the beach rock, and to accept my friendly overtures. I should have liked nothing better than to take him back to civilization with me—pricks and all. But it was impossible; Arnold's understanding was limited to apples and things of life that were not complex; he would not understand the

canoe, the restraining box, or strange and unfriendly faces; he would, in, fact, be very unhappy to be taken from the lake called Yeaton.

And so I gave him, as my final gift of goodwill, a party in the woods, to which he alone was invited. It was a party in which a little pine tree acted as host. I did it because of my liking for the prickly one—and because of my remembrance of the Peace Pine that grew on our beloved Hill Trail when Brother and I lived in the log cabin by the Bay.

The Peace Pine was so called because we ended our disputes there. It was our place of reconciliation, our place of the buried hatchet. No matter how foolishly we quarreled, or how much we regretted it, we never formally became friends until we had climbed the Hill Trail, trotted silently along the path that was lined with alders and young fir trees, and came to the little clearing where grew the tiny pine tree that we had raised almost from a seedling. Then, without further formality, we were friends again. We spoke together amicably and forgot that we had quarreled.

We never verbally admitted that we had come up the Hill Trail to end our dispute; we always pretended that it was to attend to the wants of the Peace Pine that we came. And so our first words were always of the little tree we loved, of the underbrush that must be cut away from its base so that it could have sunshine, how there were dried needles that must be carefully cleaned away from its shining branches. Because of our daily ministrations it had grown straight and beautiful, and we were proud and happy over its slow but perfect growth.

The winters of Puget Sound are not the rigorous ones of the far north country. And it was not often that the snow came deeply enough to prevent the woods folk from finding their food. But one year the snow fell heavily, in soft, thick flakes that weighed down the branches of the fir trees with glistening cushions and carpeted the floor of the forest with a crunching white matting. We were greatly worried, Brother and I, for the comfort of our friends of the woods. And we, with the grown-ups, tried as best we could

to give assistance to all the wild things that needed it. We fed bevvies of quail in the empty brooder sheds; we scattered crumbs on the bare place beneath the Mother of God rose-bush. We built a platform for the juncos and the Alaska robins to feed from. And we left unmended a broken pane in the window of the feed room so that Chee, the chipmunk, could dart into the wheat bins and fill his cheeks with grain.

But all this did not provide for those of the woods folk who did not know about the hospitality offered at the log cabin. We were afraid that they were faring very badly. So we took the Peace Pine into our confidence and told it that it should be host to the hungry ones of the Hill Trail.

It seemed to us that the little tree was glad that it should be so. For when we brushed the snow from its slender branches and powdered it instead with bread-crumbs, the long, shining needles seemed to stand very straight and proud, and it wore its necklace of popcorn with an air of delight. In every tiny crotch we put nuts and morsels of food; and from

each branch we hung little bags of wheat, knowing well that the squirrels would be equal to the task of opening them. To the very top of the tree, which was no higher than our own heads, we fastened a freshly baked cookie, formed in the shape of a star. And because Christmas was coming soon, we heightened the holiday aspect of our little tree by a glittering, silver ornament. Our Peace Pine was very gay indeed, when we had finished making it ready for the feast.

And to the tree came all manner of woods folk. Some of them we saw from the shelter of a near-by log; some of them we knew only from their tracks in the snow. But they came, all sorts of them, and accepted the bounty of the little tree as gladly as it was given. The juncos twittered merrily as they snatched at the crumbs. The Alaska robins fought with the bluejays over the morsels of food, and a pair of wild pigeons occupied themselves earnestly with pecking to pieces the cookie star at the top of the tree. The squirrels and the chipmunk went to work with a will at the bags of grain, and one enterprising striped chip-

munk solved the problem by drawing the bags up to him, working at the strings hand over hand, like a sailor. Even the rabbits came, lured out of their comfortable burrows by the appetizing scent that the laden tree sent through the snowy woods. And one night a skunk called and took away the whole string of popcorn—we found his tracks the next morning in the snow, and the light, scratching trail made by the dragging string.

The party that our Peace Pine gave was highly successful. And while the snow lasted we kept the branches of the little tree hung with food that all the woods-folk might share. When the warm sun melted the snow, and it was no longer necessary to feed our guests, we stripped the débris from the branches, made them clean and shining once more. But the silver ornament we left—it was the badge of honor that our Peace Pine had earned.

So that is why, on the distant shores of the lake called Yeaton, it seemed fitting that a pine tree should be host to him of the very many pricks. There was a young pine that grew not far from Arnold's home. And in its

straightness and isolation it reminded me of the one we had loved and cared for. So upon its branches I hung bits of bread, and placed chunks of crackers and griddle cakes in the clumps of green spines. The last of the apples I cut into bits and distributed in the crotches of the branches. And on that last day I tolled Arnold to the tree, he trundling and ticking in my wake, lured on by the apple that I held just out of his reach.

At the foot of the pine tree I explained to him about the party. I fed him the morsel of apple in my hand and stroked his soft nose. Then I took from his back one long, shining quill, white tipped with black. I did not think he would mind, because I wanted it to remember him by.

I did not tell the Cap'n about the pine tree and the farewell party. Not even when he asked me if Arnold had consented to come with us. I only hoped, as our canoe skimmed the blue unruffled waters of the lake, that my friend of the rustling quills would not come to grief, that his life would be long and peaceful. For he was without thought of harm to

any living thing. And he had seemed so surprised and grateful that anyone would wish to be friends with him.

It was more than a week later when, camped again at Indian Gardens, we saw hunters coming through the trail. They had come from Yeaton Lake, it being the opening of the moose season. And they related to the Cap'n stories of the thing they called sport. Usually I did not listen when hunters talked of killing. But I caught a sentence, spoken jocularly and all too loudly—

“Funniest thing you ever saw—a porcupine curled up in a pine tree, eating away at an apple. Sure we shot him—they kill the trees, you know.”

THE LAST MOOSE

WE lay in the shadow of the Calling Rock, the Cap'n, the Woods Girl, and I, and waited for the sun to set.

The Calling Rock rose sharply above the bog which the Indians call the Red Field. And below us, in a great circle, the bog stretched away, carpeted so closely and completely with huckleberry bushes made crimson by the frost that we could not see the ground in any place, but seemed to look out upon a scarlet lake whipped into undulating waves by the lightness of the dying breeze. The slanting rays of the setting sun glinted on the moving leaves and vibrated the silvery spider webs with which they were strung. It was like the flash of light on rippling waters—waters that were bloody red. And it seemed right that it should be so. For this lonely expanse, called by the white men Yeaton Bog, was a

favorite hunting ground for those who would kill moose. Many times had the scarlet of the huckleberry leaves been stained with a deeper, sadder crimson. Many times had there been the swift, sinister crack of bullets, and a motionless body of black huddled against the vivid color of the bushes.

Here it was, too, said the Woods Girl, that long ago Ku-nee-sah, fairest of all the Micmac maidens, waited for her lover, Great Hawk. She waited on the Calling Rock for him to return from hunting, not knowing that Fox Heart, the wicked one, had slain him treacherously, thereby hoping to win Ku-nee-sah for himself. She waited and called, and no answer came. Only the murmuring whisper of the pine trees, and the far-off, melancholy note of a loon. Suddenly the leaves of the green huckleberry bushes turned scarlet, and the sun in its sinking was like a great drop of blood. Then Ku-nee-sah knew that her lover was dead. For the Great Spirit had given her the sign of it. Slowly she came down from the Calling Rock and made her way through the narrow trail that leads to the

lake called Yeaton. And there she gave her body to the waters, for she would not live when her lover had perished.

On moonlight nights, say the Indians, you can see her shadowy form upon the Calling Rock. And in the stillness of the night you can sometimes hear her calling, calling for the lover who does not answer.

As we waited for the faint ripple of wind to die away, the Cap'n spoke slowly, his voice barely above a whisper. "It was here that I killed my last moose."

"The last of the season?" I asked, for the Cap'n had not his equal in the Nova Scotia woods as a huntsman.

"The *last*," he said with emphasis. "Something happened that—oh, well, perhaps I'll tell you about it later."

The Woods Girl smiled at me quietly. Both she and I knew what the Cap'n would have vigorously denied—that his heart was tender as a child's. And that the thought of killing for its own sake was distasteful to him.

We were silent then, watching the long, slanting shafts of sunlight grow more level

and turn from yellow gold to red gold, hot and fiery. Across Yeaton Bog the warm light shimmered, until every bush was tipped with flame, and we seemed to look forth upon a seething, molten expanse that shuddered hungrily in the fitful breeze, waiting to swallow in a burning wave all who should venture into it.

But the wind died suddenly. The tossing, crimson lake was becalmed. And the last rays of sunlight, piercing the branches of the dusky pines, fell upon it gently, lovingly, as if in good-night caress. There was a golden mistiness in the air that changed the scarlet anger of the field to a drowsy, smiling flush. From somewhere, far away, a tree-toad began its plaintive call of coming night; the air was gently fragrant with the odor of sweet-fern and pine-needles breathing forth the sweetness that the sunshine had given them.

The Cap'n raised his birch-bark moose horn to his lips. "The last time I called a moose from this rock," he commenced, then shook his head almost impatiently. "—You may see his ghost," he finished, smiling a little.

"They say the Calling Rock is noted for them."

He stood upon the Rock in silhouette against the flaming sky and fitted the moose horn carefully against his lips. Then into the quiet of the sunset he sent the plaintive, bawling call of the lady moose who is without a mate. In the intense silence we heard it echoing fainter and fainter through the dense ring of the forest that enclosed the scarlet field, and we waited, without word or movement, for many long, tense moments.

It was only for sport that the Cap'n was calling. His sole aim was to bring into the open, where I might see him unhindered by trees or shrubbery, a gentleman moose. But I could not help thinking, as he sent forth the wavering, pleading call once more, how many others had stood in hiding upon the Calling Rock, with destruction in the guns they carried, and waited for the luring call to trick an unsuspecting woods creature to its death.

Again he sent forth the call, the coaxing tones almost woven into words that a human could understand. From the woods they re-

verberated, softened into sweetness by distance. And at last, from far away, there came an answering grunt.

Very cautious it was, as if the gentleman moose would like to know more about the lady who thus invited his presence, before exposing himself in the open. The Woods Girl and I nudged each other delightedly and crouched lower behind the sheltering screen of bushes.

The Cap'n made a motion that we should be very still. Then he bent almost double and, by lifting and lowering the birch-bark horn, gave another call of invitation, a call that assured, wheedled, promised. It was clearly what the gentleman moose had been waiting for. His grunts came in quick, even succession, always nearer, and once he stopped to knock his antlers against a tree, a warning to any other suitors in the neighborhood that he had found the lady to his liking, even at a distance, and would establish his claim to her with a battle if need be.

It did not seem possible that he could be so far away. We waited hours, it seemed, for

him to reach the open bog. The daylight was fading rapidly, and we thrilled and despaired alternately. It was hard for us to keep as quiet as the Cap'n told us to.

Then suddenly we drew a deep breath. For at the edge of the bog, just to our right, where the pine trees made a jagged peninsula of black into the dull crimson of the Red Field, we saw him standing, a young bull moose, intent, graceful, unsuspecting of any guile.

Jet black he was, with flattened antlers that slanted up and back from his poised head, his powerful neck. His ears were set wide to catch an unwarranted sound; his nostrils were distended as if for further news of the lonely lady moose. He grunted questioningly, waited. And the Cap'n, from his hiding-place, called softly, coaxingly.

The young moose threw up his head and came toward us, moving so lightly through that crimson mass of bushes that we could hear not so much as the rustle of a leaf, the snap of a twig, or the suck of water between the hidden tussocks. Against the scarlet grandeur of the field his dark, graceful body

was silhouetted like a black rock in a swirling, red lake. And as he came nearer and nearer, his magnificent antlers dipping with the motion of his slim, powerful body, I felt a choking in my throat and a sudden fear for him. I wanted to rise up suddenly, to frighten him away, to cry out to him that never, never must he come again to the luring call from the Rock. That we were friendly to him and to his brethren. But that the next time, perhaps, men with guns would lurk where we were hiding, and all his powerful strength would avail him nothing in that treacherous bog where there were no trees, no friendly rocks to give him shelter from stinging, death-dealing bullets.

In our excitement we had risen, the Woods Girl and I, this time unrebuked by the Cap'n. We were plainly visible to him now, and he paused, not thirty yards away, his steady, questioning gaze upon us, his nostrils stretched wide to catch our scent, but seemingly without fear of us or what might happen to him. Motionless he stood, nonplussed, half expecting, I knew, to see the lady moose step out from

behind the Rock to join him. He regarded us curiously, yet without nervousness. He seemed quite as interested in our appearance as we were in his.

Suddenly I felt the Woods Girl's hand upon my arm, and her voice came, unguardedly loud and startled. "Father—look!" She was pointing at the moose.

I saw the Cap'n squint up his eyes and stare, with a queer expression of incredulity and wonder. Then he shook his head. "Couldn't be," he muttered; "couldn't be. Just coincidence—that's all."

Alarmed at the strangeness of our voices that splintered the light silence of the evening, the gentleman moose turned, and without seeming haste, and yet with amazingly long steps, made his way across the waning scarlet of the bog and into the sheltering shadow of the pine trees. As before, we heard not the faintest snap of a twig to mark his going. He vanished like a specter in the swiftly gathering gloom.

We hurried down from the Calling Rock, using the last remaining daylight to guide us

down the narrow trail to the lake called Yeaton, where our canoe lay upon the beach. Silently we paddled across the quiet, blue waters that still held a little of the warm rose that had flushed the cheek of the sky. A lanky heron flapped past us, a grotesque shape against the dull red of the western heavens, and in the marshes the frogs took up their deep-throated chorus. In the eastern sky a star pricked through the dusky blue, and we heard the far-away hoot of an owl. The paddles dipped rhythmically, and the light canoe glided forward with only the faintest swish of sound to mark its passing.

After supper, when the camp-fire threw ruddy gleams against the mysterious shadows of the encircling woods, the Cap'n, prompted by the Woods Girl, told me the story he had promised. A very simple story it was, and yet I knew that it was hard for him to tell. Indeed, he would not have told it at all, but that we urged and pleaded.

It was almost ten years ago, he said, when he, as guide to a party of hunters, captured a moose calf only a day old. It is the law,

in the northern country of Nova Scotia, that one may not kill a lady moose, nor yet a calf. But there were, as now, evasions of that law; and they came upon the little fellow, with ears very much too large for him, and with wabbly legs that got in his way when he tried to run. He was all alone, having lost his mother, they imagined, on that same day.

Now, when a baby moose is but two days old, he can run very respectably. But he was so new in the strange world of men that he was caught almost without trouble, and the Cap'n adopted him at sight, fed him on canned milk, and called him "Ol' Timer."

The Cap'n took the baby moose back to his home, and he was given the freedom of the barnyard and pasture. A gentle, lovable, little fellow he was, with big, brown eyes that were soft and trusting, and a spirit of curiosity that more than once threatened to be his ruination. The first time he got into trouble was when he attempted to share the morning meal of a little Jersey calf. The lady cow not only kicked him, but tried to impale him on her horns, and it was only his long and, by this

time, very swift legs that saved him from an ignominious death. It would have been a disgrace to the whole brotherhood of moose, averred the Cap'n, if one had come to grief from the hoofs and horns of an ordinary, domesticated cow.

But fortunately, there was, in the barnyard, a lady cow who took pity on the little woods orphan. Her own calf had died. And she was still lowing plaintively for her lost baby, when Ol' Timer, with his eyes very hopeful and his big ears set wide out from his head, wobbled over in the direction of the childless lady cow and experimented cautiously with a bit of breakfast.

This time he met with no discourtesy. The lady cow turned her soft, inquiring eyes upon him, as he stood contentedly twitching his absurd stump of a tail, and then she stood quietly, chewing her cud in deep contentment, and Ol' Timer was twice adopted. For she claimed him as her own child and resented any rudeness to him on the part of the other cows. She even threatened to hook the Cap'n when he came into the barnyard to fondle the baby

moose. But when she found that he meant no harm to the little changeling from the deep woods, she allowed him to come near and put his hands upon her adopted son.

So it came to pass, that as Ol' Timer grew from his pretty babyhood into lanky and awkward youth, he was at once the delight and the despair of the household. He did not realize that he was growing up, and claimed the same privileges that had been his when he was very small. He would push open the kitchen door with his great, flat nose and ease himself inside, usually with a terrific uproar, upsetting a variety of pans and kettles as he came. For he, who in his native forest would have been sure-footed and as noiseless as a shadow, was here clumsy and awkward as an ox, and it took many scoldings and severe spankings with a broomstick to convince him that his place was outside in the barnyard and not inside the house.

Even then, as he grew older, he would not go far away from the back door, waiting eagerly for scraps of food or for some one to take notice of him. He was as greedy for

petting as any dog. And with the children he was a gentle and affectionate playmate.

Strangely enough, he did not forget the lady cow who had so kindly mothered him. In the barnyard the two were much together, and she, I am sure, had loved no other of her children as she did this foundling from the forest. She did not wean him for a disgracefully long time, and even then she did not drive him away when he came near her, but allowed him to graze at her side. And sometimes her gentle, brown eyes would rest upon him meditatively, the Cap'n said, as if she were still filled with a vague wonder that this curious, brown child should have been given into her care.

One day Ol' Timer's curiosity really gave him a lasting hurt. For when the kitchen door was opened for some one to throw out a panful of scalding hot water, he loped easily toward it, just in time to receive the boiling liquid full on his shoulder. He gave a grunt of pain and tore through the barnyard helter-skelter, scattering to right and left the amazed cows and the startled poultry, shaking his head and pawing at the earth.

Of course every one was sorry it had happened, and the Cap'n put salve on the scald, which had completely taken the hair from part of his shoulder. The hurt healed in time, and the hair grew in, but part of it was white. And it made a snowy streak from his shoulder to his chest, which would easily have identified him among a hundred moose.

That was the first year of Ol' Timer's life. But happy as he was in his pleasant captivity, the time came when the call of the woods was too strong for him. Sometimes, on a clear, soundless evening, the Cap'n would see him standing in slim silhouette against the skyline, his head raised, his ears wide, his whole attitude one of waiting and listening, as if to obey instantly any call that should come from the forest where his unknown brethren dwelt.

So it was not strange that one day he was missing. And much as they loved him and much as the children mourned their playmate, they knew it was but natural that he should return to the woods. They wished him well, and the Cap'n admitted that when he guided men into the woods to shoot moose, he tried to

ascertain first whether the quarry had a streak of white on his shoulder. But he never saw Ol' Timer, nor did he hear of him through other hunters, though he always found a way to ask.

Some years later, in the autumn, he guided a party of very green, and very excited hunters through the Lake Yeaton country on a moose-hunting expedition. They knew nothing of the woods or their etiquette, and in spite of all the Cap'n could do, shot at lady deer and little fawns, as well as at harmless squirrels and chipmunks who would hardly be classed as "game."

One evening the Cap'n took them across Lake Yeaton to the Calling Rock. It was a perfect evening for calling moose, he said, and almost at the first call there came an answering grunt from far away. But with it came the reproachful, defiant response of a lady moose, who was plainly saying that she, a respectable wife, was with her husband, and that she would not let him leave her side to meet a strange and unattached siren. At each call the answer would be the same. A non-

committal grunt from the gentleman moose, and a vigorous bawl from the lady moose. The hunters were in a fever of excitement. But there was nothing to do but wait.

Then the Cap'n changed his tactics. Instead of "speaking cow," he imitated the hoarse grunt of a gentleman moose. It was a direct challenge to all within hearing. And though the moose for which they waited could resist feminine blandishments, being evidently a faithful and devoted husband, he could not withstand the haughty assertions of superiority which came to him from the direction of the Red Field.

So it was not long before they heard him coming, grunting viciously and knocking his horns emphatically against the trees.

"Just about at that clump of pine trees he will come out," the Cap'n whispered to the men, and they disposed themselves so as to have their guns trained on their expected quarry.

But when he finally came out into the open—he was not alone. The daylight was waning, but they could see him plainly, a black

outline against the darker background of the forest. And they could see that his wife had come with him, plainly fearing for his safety. Between them was a smaller silhouette, a calf of last year's mating, who stood nervously and awkwardly by his warrior father's side, and who imitated as best he could his father's attitude of tense listening. Again the Cap'n "spoke bull," and the trio moved cautiously across the open bog. "Careful," warned the Cap'n. "Don't shoot yet. You'll hit the cow or the calf."

But the men had lost all sense of caution. At the sight of the young bull moose defenseless there in the open spaces, they began shooting wildly, fiercely, their one thought to kill. Their faces were flushed with the blind desire of it.

The three woods creatures stopped and stared, huddled together a little, as if in vague wonder at the sudden treachery, at first not understanding the menace of the swift, leaden things that were whipping the scarlet leaves about them. Then the Cap'n saw the lady moose leap awkwardly, and he knew she had

been hit. Then the baby moose stumbled and almost fell. The men, unashamed, shouted at the sight. But the baby moose regained his footing, his eyes wide with fright, and ran around and around his mother in a pitiful daze of pain and wonder.

The Cap'n was cursing roundly—he asserts it without apology. For both the lady moose and her baby were hurt, and she nosed it ahead of her, limping off toward the shelter of the trees. But the baby could only go slowly, and she would not leave it behind.

Strangely enough, the gentleman moose, at whom the bullets were really aimed, had not as yet been touched. The Cap'n thought at every instant to see him turn and lope to the safety of the fast-darkening woods.

“But he didn’t go,” said the Cap’n. “He could have got away—I wanted to see him show his heels to those mad fools there on the Rock. But he didn’t go. As true as gospel I’m telling this—he moved forward ever so little, just between that deadly rain of bullets and his mate, and deliberately, so help me, *turned his body broadside to those men, so*

that it made a shield for his mate and his baby!

"If they hadn't been fair out of their heads with excitement, they couldn't have done what they did. They couldn't have kept on shooting at that moose who stood there, out in the open, entirely at their mercy, yet capable, I knew, and they knew, of getting out of range in half a minute. If they had had any decency or sportsmanship left in them they couldn't have kept on pumping lead into him like that, for he stood there, like the game trooper he was, his flanks dripping with blood, the bullets snapping against his antlers. He lowered his head, shook it as if in defiance, made a motion of pawing the ground. But he never once turned tail to run; he never once moved aside so as to expose the cow or the calf.

"They moved off together very slowly, with the bull moose still keeping his body broadside to the guns and the bullets. They were killing him, of course, but just by inches. Once he staggered to his knees, and those fools shouted themselves hoarse. They thought they

had him. But the cow bawled, a frightened, pathetic sort of call, and he knew he had to play the game to the finish. He threw up his head, half raised himself—and another bullet hit him. Then with a stagger that seemed to take all his strength, he got to his feet, started again after his cow and calf—*still shielding them with his body*. It was the bravest thing I ever saw, from man or beast—

“He was hurrying them now, as if he knew that he couldn’t hold out much longer. He would push against the cow with his antlers, sort of butt the limping calf along with the flat of his head.

“I couldn’t stand it, not a minute longer. They were riddling him to pieces with their wild shooting, and they were wounding the cow and calf, despite all the protection that the moose could give them. I had shouted myself black in the face trying to make the fools listen to me. They wouldn’t. So I ran from behind the bush where I had hidden to call the moose, up on to the Rock. I grabbed the gun of the fellow nearest me, aimed at the bull moose—and fired.”

There was a long silence which none of us seemed to wish to break. The Cap'n was staring into the fire.

"Well," he said at last, "when we plowed across the bog—it's not easy for men to get through it—we found him there at the edge of the woods, just where I had dropped him. I needn't tell you how he looked—you can imagine that. But the thing that turned me sort of sick inside was to see, when they lifted up his head—a streak of white down from his shoulder to his chest, a streak of white I'd have known anywhere.

"It was Ol' Timer, sure enough. It was that selfsame crazy, wabbly, little moose calf, who had sucked my fingers the first day we caught him, and tried to butt me once because I took him away from a Jersey cow he was nursing—"

Again we sat in silence, looking into the fire rather than at each other.

"Things like that are supposed to happen only in stories," the Cap'n said slowly. "But this did happen, just as I've told it. After that I couldn't shoot a moose—silly, maybe,

but somehow every time I'd have my gun on a bull moose, I'd get the picture of Ol' Timer, as he stood there that evening, taking those bullets, never trying to get away, doing the best he could for his cow and calf—no, sir, I just couldn't shoot."

My voice sounded queerly unsteady as I asked how the lady moose and her baby had fared.

The Cap'n spoke without turning his head. "I don't know. I hope they lived. I'd hate to think that Ol' Timer's sacrifice went for nothing. Moose hide is tough, of course, but you never can tell."

Then the Woods Girl spoke eagerly. "I *know* they lived," she said with calm assurance. "Why, that moose you called tonight—didn't you see that white streak on his shoulder? I thought at first it was Ol' Timer himself. But it might have been his son—it *was* his son, I know it!"

The Cap'n shrugged his shoulders noncommittally. "Well, perhaps," he said cautiously, and rose to fling more wood on the fire.

The Woods Girl and I looked at each other,

smiling a little tremulously. For the Cap'n's face in the firelight had lost its tension. We knew that he was thinking of a gentleman moose—and his son.

IN MEMORY *of the* LOON

I LIKED the Woods Girl, who was the Cap'n's daughter. She could run a trail in silence; she knew how to step on sticks so they would not snap a warning to the dwellers of the woods; she had learned the Indian trick of walking a narrow and slippery log with toes well turned in and feet gripping the sides. She knew, too, the intimate secrets of the northern forest. She pointed out to me the moose wood, or striped maple, on which the moose feed in the springtime. She found for me the herb called "golden root," with its single, tapering thread of yellow, from which the Micmac Indians brew teas that will cure a fever. She could find unerringly the white violets that bloom in the marshy bogs when autumn comes; and when a bird called from the green mystery of the forest around us, she knew its name and all its habits.

The lore of the Nova Scotia Indians was hers completely. She knew their tales of old war days, when they crossed the Bay of Fundy in birch-bark canoes to subdue the fierce Algonquins; she knew also their legends and their beliefs. It was from the fulness of her knowledge that she spoke to me from the stern of the canoe as we were paddling across First Lake from our camp at Indian Gardens to see another lake she knew of, a lake which she had found and named.

"Do you know why the cry of the loon is so mournful?"

"Yes," I replied, "the Siwashes of Puget Sound say it is because he once ate too many clams and they made him ill. Now he cannot eat clams at all, and it grieves him."

She laughed at the lack of romance in my words, and for a moment we glided sibilantly through the twinkling little waves of the lake, our paddles rising and falling with a murmuring rhythm. The shore that receded slowly behind us made a fluting of color against the intense blue of the sky. For the flaming maples, the oaks wrapped in scarlet

cloaks like matadors, and the beeches, fluttering their yellow leaves like kerchiefs, were massed against the horizon as if they had come down to bid us adieu.

Before us lay the dim outlines of the farther shore, vaguely green, and with the tree tops lying in soft scallops against the sky's azure cloak. Small, black-and-white ducks dotted the surface of the lake, and over toward our right hand we caught the silhouette of a lanky heron standing knee-deep in the shallow water, waiting patiently for a chance morsel of fish to come his way.

During the silence a kingfisher rattled above our heads, darting down in a swift flash of blue barely to touch the crest of a little wave and then to rise again. And as if he had tardily heard my speech about the mournful cry of that most melancholy of birds, a black loon, who was bobbing like a piece of burnt cork with the motion of the waves, sent out his clear, plaintive note and ended it with a sardonic chuckle.

"He doesn't approve of your version," the Woods Girl remarked.

"Perhaps yours will please him more," I answered her.

And so, as we slipped along the highway of the lake, our slender canoe dividing the water as with a thin, green knife, she told me the legend of how the loon came to be. It is the story that the Micmacs tell. And none of them will ever kill one of the black brethren.

There was once, long ago, she said, a powerful Micmac chief who was called Black Feather. He ruled his people wisely and well until he became enamored of Young Moon, daughter of a neighboring chieftain. He wished to marry her and made overtures to her father. But Young Moon had set her heart on a man of her own tribe, called Five Trails, and she begged her father not to give her in marriage to a man she did not love, even to such a powerful chieftain as Black Feather of the Micmacs. So the father, knowing well that by yielding to the maiden's wishes he would risk a bloody war with his fierce neighbors, sent to Black Feather an arrow tipped with a broken point of white quartz, and a dead female partridge. He sent also a snake

skin wrapped about a stone on which was drawn a picture of the moon when it is very young.

Black Feather read the symbols rightly and resolved to win the heart of Young Moon by strategy. For the message of the broken arrow, the dead partridge, the snake skin, and the stone was this:

"Force is useless in winning a woman's heart. If you come with arrows, you will win only a dead bride. Better far disguise your plans with the cunning of a snake, and with craft you will obtain the heart of Young Moon, which is now to you only a heart of stone."

"Be it so," said Black Feather, and he sent his spies to find out who it was that the maiden loved.

When he knew that it was Five Trails, he was sorely perplexed, for the young man was a great warrior and well loved by all who knew him. Even Black Feather did not dare to destroy him openly.

So he went to an evil medicine woman who dwelt with his tribe, and promised her a great

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reward if she would make a spell that would rid him of his rival.

"Seek him out in friendship," said the evil woman, "and tell him that you have found a spell that will turn you both into birds. Induce him to be transformed with you for a few minutes, by eating the berries that I will give you.

"When you are both turned into birds," said the medicine woman, "I will take the form of a hawk and pounce down upon him and kill him. Then will I pronounce the words that will bring you back to your human shape."

Black Feather did as she bade him. He sent rich presents to Five Trails and pretended that he was his friend. Then some time afterward he proposed to the young man that they turn themselves into birds for a little while.

"Do not take part in this magic," said Young Moon when her lover told her of the plan. "I do not trust the chief of the Micmacs. He will do you harm."

But Five Trails had an intrepid spirit and saw no danger in the adventure. So the two went out together, through the woods and to

the shore of a lake, there to eat the magic berries. They did not know that Young Moon followed them, armed with a bow and arrow, for she knew in her heart that her beloved's life was in danger.

Now, when Black Feather and Five Trails had eaten the magic berries, the Micmac chief immediately became a loon with glossy, black feathers. The lover of Young Moon was transformed into a white duck with five streaks of brown on his head.

No sooner had they become thus transformed, than a huge hawk came swooping down upon them and seized the white duck in her talons. As he saw it, Black Feather, in the body of the loon, uttered a low, chuckling laugh, and Young Moon heard it and knew that her lover was in great distress. So she ran to the edge of the lake and aimed at the hawk who was flying off with the white duck. Straight to the heart her arrow went, and the hawk released the white duck, which was dashed to pieces on the rocks below. The hawk fell, too, snatching at the arrow in its breast, trying to pull it out. But the arrow had gone

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deep, and the evil medicine woman died without ever taking back her human form.

Young Moon cried aloud when she knew that her lover was dead. And she aimed an arrow at the black loon, but did not release the string of the bow.

"No," she said, "you are not worthy of death. You shall live forever as a black loon, and hereafter the souls of all men who are treacherous shall at death become loons and cry mournfully upon the waves of the lakes and the sea."

When Black Feather heard her words and knew that he was never to resume his human form again, he tried to cry out, to beg for mercy. But the curse of the bereft maiden was upon him, and his voice sounded only as a clear, mournful bird note. The chief was indeed punished for his treachery.

So spoke the Woods Girl, as our canoe glided toward the welcoming splendor of the opposite shore. And as she ceased, we heard the black loon's hollow chuckle far behind us.

"He doesn't approve of *your* version either," I said.

We landed our canoe on the pebbly beach of First Lake. About us was the fragrant stillness of midday. Before us the huckleberry bushes made a crimson fringe for the golden garment of the forest, and here and there we saw glowing maple leaves, circling in the air like a wandering flame, floating gently down upon the strewn carpet of moss and grass.

In silence we made our way into the deep woods, following an almost imperceptible trail. The wild asters lifted their blue, fringed faces as we brushed past; pigeon-berries stained the leaves red when we trod upon them. Past the grove of maples we went, far beyond, where the great pines stood in solemn isolation, and the young hemlocks grouped themselves together like young bachelors and eyed the whispering, gossiping lady alder trees with superior disdain.

Through the stately rows of pine trunks and the maze of spruce branches we could glimpse the lake, vividly blue, and so tiny that it seemed like a lost little lake that had wandered away from its home and fallen asleep in the protecting arms of the great forest.

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"I call it the Lake of the Loon," said the Woods Girl. And this was the story she told me:

It seems that in a harbor of the Atlantic coast where the Woods Girl had at one time lived, the vessels emptied their waste oil upon the water, and many of the sea birds were killed by the poisonous fluid.

Many people doubted that this was true, she told me. But I did not doubt it, for once, on the far-away shores of Puget Sound, I had cared for an old-man sea-gull who had come to grief in the same manner.

The Woods Girl lived with her father on a point of land that went far out into the ocean, and from the beach she used to stand and throw scraps of food upon the waters for the sea-gulls and the ducks to eat.

On a day in warm summer she saw near the point a flock of slow-moving loons, bobbing on the water like black corks. One of them, she noticed, swam with difficulty. And when little by little, his black kindred drifted away from him, she heard his low, mournful call as he raised himself in the water and beat his

wings as if with despair at their very futility.

Silently she watched him, and wondered. He tried patiently to follow the flock of loons that was slowly moving away from him, but they went on, stoically, indifferently. Soon they were only a distant cloud of darkness upon the blue water, and he, a lonely dot of black, was utterly forsaken.

She saw then that he could not swim at all, that he was being overwhelmed by the light yet forceful waves. A breaker took him up playfully, tossed him on its crest, hurled him in to shore. And so to her feet he was carried, a miserable, dragging bundle of limp feathers, and he lay there, gasping, on the whiteness of the beach.

When the Woods Girl came up to him, the black loon did not try to escape her friendly hands, for his strength was spent, and he was choking with every breath. His one-time glossy plumage was caked with a thick oil, and he turned his head listlessly, pulling at his feathers with his beak, trying to rid himself of the deadly fluid.

The Woods Girl took him in charge then,

carried him to her home on the point, tried to wash the oil from his feathers, and offered him food to eat. But he could not eat. The taste of the nauseating oil had drowned his hunger. So she made him comfortable for the night and called him Black Feather. She named him so from the Micmac legend of how the loon came to be.

In the days that followed, Black Feather came to know the Woods Girl and to love her. He was sick and miserable. But when she came to the box she had prepared for him, he would raise his head so that she might stroke his throat, and would utter little murmuring noises of content and affection.

Daily she bathed him and gave him medicine that she thought would bring him back to health. And when she thought he was strong enough, she took him down to the shore and set him in the soft, rippling water. When he felt again the cool waves about him, he lifted his wings and beat upon the water joyfully for an instant. Triumphantly he sent his mournful call across the blue expanse to tell his kindred that he was again in the element

that he knew and loved. But still he could not swim. He sensed his helplessness and knew that the Woods Girl was the only one who could give him aid. So awkwardly and slowly he paddled back to the beach, came out of the water, and made his way to the Woods Girl's feet. And when she stooped to take him up in her arms, he ran his bill against her hand and made sad, little, murmuring noises. It was his way of telling her that he was still an invalid and unable to care for himself.

The Woods Girl and her father, the Cap'n, were soon going camping, and there was no one with whom she could trust Black Feather. She knew that he would be lonely without her and that no one else would take the interest in his welfare that she did. So when they went into the forest, Black Feather went with them in a comfortable box warmly padded. And when they came to the place on First Lake where they made their camp, the Woods Girl took Black Feather down to the shore where he could paddle about in the water if he liked. He was too weak to swim far, and seemed

fearful of leaving the shore lest he lose forever the friend who had ministered to him in his distress. But daily, when the sun shone warmly, she carried him down to the white, pebbly beach and let him bask there in contentment with the wind lifting the blue-black feathers from his neck and the little waves rippling up to his webbed feet as if in invitation.

The Cap'n and the Woods Girl knew that Black Feather could not live. He had swallowed too much of the poisonous oil in a vain attempt to cleanse his draggled plumage. Neither of them knew of any medicine that would cure him, for nothing they gave him seemed to help. They could only be kind to him and care for him assiduously. And this they did. For the loon seemed to realize their efforts on his behalf and to be grateful for them.

One day the Woods Girl explored an old moose path back into the woods from First Lake. She took Black Feather with her, carrying him in the crotch of her arm, and he huddled there contentedly, now and then run-

ning his bill against her flannel blouse as if in light caress. Through the fringe of huckleberry bushes she went, on through the grove of maples and oaks, past the sentinel pines and the disdainful hemlocks. There, at the end of the trail, she found the little lake glinting in the warm sunlight, the tiny, lost lake that nestled in the arms of the protecting forest. In the warm, sunshiny water were wild ducks swimming, moving leisurely and gently over the surface of the calm water, leaving in their wake triangular lines of ripples that broadened and faded into calmness once more. The Woods Girl gently placed Black Feather in the warm, shallow water and left him there while she went back into the greenery which bound the lake, to explore further trails that she had seen.

It was almost sunset when she came back through the woods to the lake—and Black Feather was not there. She hastily skirted the shore, but she did not find him. And the darkness of the north woods was closing swiftly down upon the lake and the almost imperceptible trail. She hurried back to the camp

on First Lake very sorrowful at heart, because she feared that harm had come to her friend while she was away from him.

That night it was very still in the woods. The silver birches stood like young knights, enchanted into an age-long sleep, and even the lake slumbered, drawing close its dotted robe of lily pads. There was no moon. Only the stars gleamed near, like bright eyes looking over the rampart of heaven, and the pale spirit fire of the Northern Lights shot up toward the zenith in wavering streamers of bluish white.

The camp-fire burned redly, almost silently, as if the very flames feared to disturb the quiet of the night. And suddenly, from the far distance, the call of a loon was heard, wavering, mournful, a soft, sad note as if the night had spoken in melancholy.

"Father," said the Woods Girl, "that is Black Feather calling."

The Cap'n smiled incredulously. But she was sure of it. The sound came from the direction of the little, lost lake. There had been no loons on it when she had been there

in the afternoon, and it was altogether possible, she reasoned, that Black Feather, finding himself deserted, was calling to her in the only way he knew, asking her to come to him and care for him.

The Cap'n was skeptical, but willing to accompany her through the woods to see if the black loon was indeed there on the shore of the lake. So with a primitive lantern made of a candle inside a tomato tin, they went back into the intense blackness of the woods, the flickering light of the small lantern dancing before them like an impish will-o'-the-wisp. At intervals they heard the plaintive notes of the loon rising and falling on the stillness of the night air, and far away, as if in mockery, came the derisive "Hoo-hoo, hoo-*hoo*!" of the night owl.

At last they came to the shore of the lost little lake, and the glint of the light in the water was as the reproachful blinking of a child suddenly aroused from deep slumber. They stood still and listened. For a moment there was silence. Then from the shrubbery that fringed the lake's edge they heard again

the mournful call, faint and broken. Hurriedly they followed the sound, followed it into the shrubbery. And there, in a little, marshy recess, they found Black Feather, the loon, and with him was a lady wild duck, a hurt lady duck, with drooping wing and blood-stained plumage. She lay on her side, breathing fitfully, and sometimes the hurt wing jerked as if with a spasm of pain.

For an instant the Cap'n and the Woods Girl looked at each other. It was unbelievable. It gave credence, almost, to the legend still believed by the Indians, that in the body of the black loon dwells a human soul, fettered and helpless, yet understanding sorrow and penitence. For there on guard by the wounded lady wild duck stood Black Feather, his head raised and alert, his neck stretched to its fullest length. When the Woods Girl spoke to him, he came to her in the dignified, waddling way he had, and when she stooped to take him up, he made little, murmuring noises and ran his bill across her hand.

The Cap'n lifted the wounded lady duck with tender hands, but a hunter's bullet had

gone too deeply. She lay in his hands, gasping, and presently she died.

"Well, old fellow," said the Cap'n to Black Feather with real respect in his voice, "at least you did your best for her."

That is almost the end of the black loon's story. For he did not live to go back with the Woods Girl to the cabin on the point. One morning they found him dead in his box, and the Woods Girl cried as she lifted the inert body of her feathered friend.

She buried Black Feather on the shore of the little, lost lake. And in his memory she called it "The Lake of the Loon." No map speaks of the little, jeweled bit of water; no hunter or trapper knows the name of the tiny, tree-girdled pond. But in the heart of the Woods Girl it will always be a reminder of a gallant deed. Assuredly, if the soul of the Micmac chief had gone into the body of Black Feather, the loon, it must now be at rest. He has atoned for his ancient sin.

The FRIEND *who was* HURT

ON the trails of the northland, where autumn had flung her glowing cloak over the forest, I found my memory carried westward to the Sound country and to something that happened there many years ago when Brother and I roamed the woods in friendship with the wild things, and sailed upon the bay in our little white boat with its leg-o'-mutton canvas. It was a happening I have never forgotten, but it came back to me so clearly that day, called to mind by one of those delicate pastorals that one finds at every turn of the trail in the friendly woods of Nova Scotia.

We were looking for a camping place on the lake called Yeaton, the Cap'n, the Woods Girl, and I. Our canoe was lying placidly against the rocks of the shore, and the Cap'n had left us a moment to see if in the deep

thicket of the woods there was a clearing where we could pitch our tents. We sat silently in the canoe without caring to talk, for the day was very quiet; the sunshine lay warmly on the glinting water and the flickering red and gold on autumn leaves.

In this silence there appeared, directly ahead of us, a dainty mother deer, so small as to be easily mistaken for the elder sister of the little fawn who followed her. She came over the rocks picking her way delicately and without so much as the click of a pebble. It was in her mind to swim the lake, which was so narrow here that it would be no hard task. And so intent was she on finding the proper place to enter the water that she did not see us in the green canoe. Nor did she catch our scent, for the slight breeze was blowing from behind her.

With little, mincing steps she went down into the water and swam out toward the opposite shore. The baby deer was about to follow her into the lake, when suddenly he saw us, and in his startled gaze was a mixture of curiosity, hesitation, and fear. If his mother

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had been with him, he would not have minded us so much. But he suddenly realized that she was swimming away from him, that he was alone with creatures he had never seen before. His panic was ludicrous. He uttered a snort of alarm; his tail twitched in a frenzy of fear. He half slipped, half fell from the rock and landed in the water with a great splash, his tiny forefeet churning awkwardly and desperately.

The mother deer was swimming placidly toward the opposite shore, and he could not overtake her, though he tried with all his might. She went up on the beach, shook herself like a dog, and nibbled at some grass which grew close to the water's edge.

The little fellow, however, leaped out of the water and dashed away into the woods, with the mother deer looking after him as if wondering at his strange behavior. We could well imagine the turmoil that was in his small mind. He wanted to escape from the unknown peril, but he wanted his mother with him. So out of the woods he came, up to the mother deer, and planted himself in a pose

that suggested flight, looking intently at us across the narrow stretch of water. Perhaps he told her of the curious creatures there, for presently she followed his disturbed gaze and saw us, too.

For an instant she held herself motionless, her whole expression tense and wondering. Then she gave a great leap and dashed away into the shelter of the woods, with the baby following close behind her. The flash of their white tails was like the sudden winging of birds.

"That," said the Woods Girl, "was a pretty picture."

I sat silent, for across my mind had flashed the picture of another deer in the water who swam from shore to shore. But he swam for his life, and there was no pretty ending to the picture.

We thought in symbols, Brother and I. If a wet leaf blew across our faces, we knew that a welcome guest would soon arrive. If we found two sticks crossed in the trail or at the foot of a tree, we knew that a gnome had set his seal upon that spot, and that we must care-

fully avoid stepping on it until the wind had blown the sticks away. We knew that if a frog croaked in the daytime, it was a sign of coming trouble, and any enterprise undertaken in the face of such a warning would have a disastrous conclusion. So when I aimed an arrow at the target we had fixed to a dead pine tree, and hit instead the Old Man stump, Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah, we knew that some hidden meaning was contained in the ill-aimed flight of the arrow. I was ordinarily a good shot with the bow and arrows the Siwash Chief had given us. It was unthinkable that I should have missed the target at such a short distance.

Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah is the Chinook name for "Old Man of the Forest." And he was one of our dearest friends. Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah was a cedar stump who stood in a little clearing just at the top of the Hill Trail, and it did not need our fertile imagination to see the semblance of a face upon the shaggy sides of the once mighty tree, for loggers, in cutting it, had made two slits which looked like eyes, and there was a long, bulgy line of fungus

which was a great deal like a nose. Underneath was a wider gash where they had first commenced to chop. And to complete the resemblance to a grim old Indian, a red huckleberry bush grew from the top of the stump and waved in the breeze like a war plume.

Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah was very grim and unsmiling, and well he might be, for the Siwash Chief told us that he had once been a mighty leader among the Fifty Tribes, but by his arrogance had offended his people. So they buried him alive, up to his neck, and left him to die. For five days and nights the tortured chief bore his punishment without complaint, then, his endurance failing, he called upon the Great Spirit to have pity on his suffering. The Great One heard and transformed him into a stump. And thus he stands always, a lesson to those who would abuse the confidence of others.

Brother and I were fond of Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah, and we felt somehow that he liked us too—that he liked to have us come and sit near him, and tell him of the things we had seen along the trail. He never smiled, but it

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was our dearest hope that some day he would.

When the arrow lodged in the rough bark just above the grim gash that was his mouth, Brother and I looked at each other in dismay.

"It means something," said he with conviction.

"Yes," I agreed. "We will ask the Siwash Chief."

We found him digging for clams along the mud flats just beyond the Pointing Finger. He straightened for a moment and looked out across the blue waters of the bay as if to find the answer to our questions. Then he spoke laconically.

"It means that you will hurt a friend."

The days came and went, and the evil prophecy of the ill-aimed arrow was not fulfilled. For we set a guard on our lightest words and actions lest they injure one of the things we loved. We were exceptionally polite to Tom Tinker, the rat terrier, and I let Amarillo, the yellow cat, share my bed, even though his fur was wet and cold from walking through the dew-drenched grass. We took particular pains to see that Chee, the chip-

munk, got his daily quota of wheat from the barrel in the feed-room, and placed a bit of apple every day at the foot of the hollow tree where we believed a gnome king lived.

Then came the hunting season. We dreaded it desperately, for it brought with it the bay-ing of hounds on the hill, the echo of gun shots deep in the woods, and the crash of underbrush where a terror-stricken deer was dashing through. Those days were hard and cruel ones for the wild things of the woods, and Brother and I hated with unreasoning venom the brown-faced men with red bands around their hats, who passed by the little log cabin, gun in hand, on the trail of what they called "sport."

Sometimes they paused at the spring for a drink of water and related to each other stories of the previous day's experience—of how much game they had killed, of the quarry that had escaped them, of the deer they had wounded, but not to death.

It was these last stories that made Brother and me clench our hands and shed hot tears after the brown-faced men had gone by, for

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once we had seen a wounded doe in the woods. We had come upon her in the face of the wind, so that she had not scented our approach. But at sight of us she had sprung up and faced us for an instant, her great, brown eyes glazed as if with fever, her body pain-quivering. There was a crusted smear on her flank, and she dragged a hind leg that was limp and swollen. For an instant she stood thus, her eyes distended with fear. Then she dashed away through the underbrush, careening on three legs with the hurt one bumping cruelly on logs and stumps. The men called it "sport" because they did not know.

There came a morning when we heard the baying of hounds on the opposite shore a mile across the cove. All through the forenoon we listened, standing on the float. Sometimes the long-drawn cries of the dogs came from far back in the hills. Sometimes they changed to sharp, staccato barks close down to the water's edge. And always we knew that a tired deer was being relentlessly hunted from clearing to clearing, through underbrush, through forest vistas, down to the graveled beach, and our

hearts burned within us. Suddenly, from the greenery of the woods directly across from us, a deer leaped out, paused for a breathless instant, then dashed down the beach and into the bay. Three dogs came close behind, their furious baying changing into sharp, triumphant yelps. A moment later two men came crashing out of the underbrush and hurried down to the water's edge.

Oh, how we hoped that the deer was safe! We could see the speck that was his head, as he breasted the little waves in an effort to reach our side of the cove. And as he came nearer, we saw that he was an antlered buck. The graceful branches stood up from his head like tiny trees. He swam steadily, but low in the water as if he were very tired and could scarcely endure the effort of escape.

It is the law of the Puget Sound country that a deer cannot be killed if it reaches the sanctuary of the water. Or if it swims to the opposite shore, it is safe. But many are the violations of the law, for there is a provision which permits an Indian to kill a deer at any time or any place—even in the bay. And most

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of the brown-faced men who hunted through our woods brought with them a Siwash, not to guide them, but to cut the throat of a deer if it escaped from the woods into the water.

The men on the opposite shore had found or bargained for a boat. We saw them push off from the beach, each pulling upon an oar. The deer seemed to sense pursuit, for he veered a little in his course, as if confused.

"Come this way—oh, come this way!" I called out to him. As if he had heard, the buck swung around until he headed straight for the float, his antlers rising and falling with the motion of his heavy, almost listless swimming.

Nearer and nearer came the tired deer, and nearer came the men. They were abreast of the panic-stricken animal; they turned the boat and headed him away from the shore. He churned the water, threw back his head in a frenzy of fear, and swung out in the opposite direction. One of the men leaned forward with an oar and brought it crashing down upon his head.

We cried out. For there was a sickening

instant when the gallant head with its graceful antlers disappeared from sight. Then he rose, splashing dizzily, and swimming very slowly, came toward our shore once more. Again the men maneuvered their boat so as to cut off his escape, and I saw a long hunting knife flash as they reached for his throat.

It was then that I heard Brother speaking in a voice that was only a hoarse whisper.

"Quick! They haven't an Indian with them!"

It was true. The boat was near enough so that we could see that both of the men were white. For once the law was being openly broken, and the hunters had no right to their quarry.

In the space of a heart beat we had untied our little white boat from the float and leaped into it, and Brother and I, each at an oar, were fairly skimming across the waves, heading toward the men and the harassed animal.

As we rowed we shouted, fierce, menacing shouts out of proportion to our size and age, but it gained for us a little time, for the men heard us and paused upon their oars.

Deliberately we swung our boat between them and the deer. His eyes were bulging, and there was a deep gash over his nostrils where the oar had struck. His strength was almost gone; he was barely moving in the water.

“Get out of the way!”

The men shouted angrily, and threatened us with an oar. But we were not to be intimidated. Instead, we threatened them. They could not kill a deer in the water, we told them tensely. They had no Indian with them, they were breaking the law in pursuing the deer out into the bay. They tried to row around us, but our boat was lighter than theirs, and we were more skilful at the oars. Again we placed ourselves between them and the deer, who with slow and feeble strokes was striking out for the beach.

If they tried to kill our friend we would give a description of them to the sheriff, we said fiercely. We would call the grown-ups to witness that they had broken the law—we threatened a hundred impossible things, and at last the men, convinced of our earnestness,

backed water, and rowed away, cursing as far as we could hear them.

The antlered buck, dazed and staggering, dragged himself up on to the beach just by the float, and stood still, trembling. It seemed as if his slender legs would not support his weight, for they wobbled under him, and his delicate nostrils were wide and quivering.

When we came up to him, he was not startled, and let us put our arms around his neck and stroke his wet, shining flanks. He was too tired to be afraid. His antlers had prongs to the number of five, and his brown fur was sleek and heavy. In his great, brown eyes was that hunted, wondering look that sometimes makes men pause, even with gun upraised. He seemed to question us mutely, to ask why humans desired his life, to ask us if he could trust our friendly intentions.

We brought fresh water to him in a bucket and bathed the cruel gash above his nostrils. He drank eagerly, gratefully, pushing his nose far down into the cool water, his flanks heaving spasmodically.

For almost an hour we stayed with him

upon the beach. Little by little his legs grew steady, and he ceased his convulsive trembling. Once he nibbled at a leaf of fresh lettuce that Brother brought him from the garden. Somehow his eyes lost their hunted look, and they were very big and gentle and trusting.

We thought if we could get him up the beach until we reached a place where the woods came down to the shore, he would be safe. Few hunters came there, and we felt that once rested from his fatiguing run and swim, he could care for himself.

So with gentle pats and words, we urged him along the beach, and the little stones crunched under his slow, yet dainty tread. He did not want to go—we never thought of that afterward without a heartache. For he would pause, alert and trembling, his head raised, his nostrils sniffing at the breeze. Then he would go forward again, in obedience to our light touch upon his flanks.

When at last we reached the place where the woods sloped gently down to meet the shoreline, where Oregon grape bushes and tall ferns made a screen for the deeper green-

ery within, we sent our friend up into the maze of young maples and whispering alders and stood hand in hand listening to the faint swish of the underbrush as he passed through.

Then we started back to the cabin. We had gone but a hundred yards when we heard that most dreaded of all sounds—a shot.

For an instant we stood motionless, frozen with a premonition of evil. Then we raced back along the beach, our breath coming in sharp catches. Into the woods we plunged at the spot where we had left our friend—through the underbrush we dashed—past a little waterfall that dripped over cool, fresh-smelling moss—we stopped to listen, and heard a man's voice speaking:

“Some shot! And look what antlers!”

With heads down and bodies bent forward we crashed through a thicket of young fir trees, whose interlaced branches whipped our faces as we plunged past them. We thrust aside the tall network of ferns and emerged on the edge of a small clearing. Two amazed hunters were looking at us—one held a gun half raised. But we had no eyes for them—only for a

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slim, brown body that lay terribly still, with a scarlet wound from which the blood was trickling slowly, regretfully.

"That's—our—friend!" I heard myself saying jerkily, and the men stared at us curiously.

Brother was speaking in a stifled tone as if tears were close behind his words. "We tried hard to save him—he was so tired—and he was an awfully nice deer—"

The men were looking at us with perplexity in their gaze. There was pity, too. One shot had done for him, they said. He had come through the fir thicket, had paused, looking at them, and one of them had fired.

We told them then, as well as we could, of the gallant struggle the deer had made for freedom, of how we had tried to help him, how he had trusted us to show him a place in the woods where he would be safe.

The older man smiled a little. It was too bad, he said, but he would bring us some of the venison.

Venison! The flesh of our friend!

We shook our heads, and I put my cheek

down against the soft, velvety throat of the dead deer.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," I told him over and over, and hot tears came that ran from my face down on his.

The younger man lifted me to my feet and dried my eyes.

"It wasn't your fault. You did the best you could for him," he said, and there was a catch in his voice as if he, too, were sorry that our friend was dead.

"He will never know that," I answered, turning my face away from him, for I was ashamed of tears.

The younger man looked rather sheepishly at the older one, then he spoke to me in a low tone.

"Don't you think it might make a difference—that he would know somehow—if I told you that I won't hunt any more of his kindred, if I promised you that I'll never shoot another deer?"

"Perhaps," I said, and thanked him.

Brother and I went slowly back to the beach. Our hearts were very heavy, and we

sat on the float for a long time without speaking.

On the next day we went up the Hill Trail past the clearing where Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah lived. I would have hurried by, for the memory of the arrow sticking in the bark above his mouth—that, and what it had meant—was too strong for me.

But I heard Brother's voice calling me, and I halted.

"Look!" he cried in amazement. "*Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah is smiling!*"

And it was true. Our old man of the forest was indeed smiling. For the wind had blown a sheaf of wet leaves up against the grim gash that was his mouth, forming them in a crescent. Even his eyes seemed strangely soft.

"It means something—oh, it must mean something!"

We spoke in a breath and looked at each other with a great hope stirring in our hearts. If it meant what we wanted it to—

We found the Siwash Chief on the beach, just as we had found him that other day. Breathlessly we told him of the sad fate of

our friend, of our sorrow, of the younger hunter's promise—of Kee-Wah-Nee-Tah's smile. What was the meaning of the smile, we asked him pleadingly.

The old chief lifted his face that was the color of old leather, and he was smiling, too. His bright, black eyes were very gentle as he looked at us.

"It means that your friend forgives you," he said slowly, and again I wept—but this time for happiness.

This was the memory that came to me from childhood days and from the far-away country of Puget Sound. It was good to know that the lady deer and her baby could swim the little lake in safety. I wish somehow that the kindly young man who gave his promise to a child years ago could have seen the picture of them as we saw it. It would have well repaid him for his impulsive kindness.

I looked over toward the woods on the opposite shore of the lake, where the mother and her baby had disappeared.

"Lady deer," I said in my heart, "may you never have a friend who will hurt you!"

ADVENTURES IN CAPTIVITY

The THIRD DAY *of the* MOON

IT was the third day of the new moon. And in the menagerie of the great motion picture studio there were two births—and two deaths. For in adjacent cages Sarah, the lion cub, and Lady, the collie pup, sprawled inertly, blind and helpless, by their mothers' bodies. Julia, the lioness, and Lisette, the collie mother, lay silent with glazed eyes. The animal men carried them away and cleaned the cages, and two small orphans faced the world of men and make-believe from behind stout iron bars.

Perhaps you may think it strange that Lady's gentle mother should have lived in a cage, even as Julia, the amber-eyed and sav-

age lioness. Lisette would not have been a captive but for her habit of running away from the motion picture lot just when she was needed to contribute her famous smile to a drama or an animal comedy. For the collie lady had big, brown eyes and a trick of lifting her upper lip when she was pleased. The director would praise her extravagantly until, overwhelmed with his flattery, she would turn her head on one side, roll her brown eyes up at him, and wrinkle her upper lip into an ingratiating smile. Then the camera would grind, and Lisette's smile would be transferred to celluloid.

But for the Gipsy streak in her which prompted her to roam at inopportune times, she would have been allowed the liberty of the "ranch," as the menagerie and its adjacent lots were called.

I knew both Lisette and Julia well. For I loved the menagerie, with its smell of hot, dry sand and its vague animal odors which caused strange dogs to pause and sniff questioningly, with hair bristling along their frightened spines. It was enclosed with a great, high

fence, and inside, the great square was flanked with rows of cages. In one long tier the lions drowsed in tawny indifference or padded the length of their cages rhythmically. Across from them lived the Malemute dogs from Alaska, who worked in northern pictures and drew sledges over fields of rock salt instead of snow. At one end of the square the monkeys chattered continually, swung from trapezes, and quarreled fiercely over peanuts and fleas. Near them lived the Russian wolves, gaunt, fierce fellows with pointed noses and pale gray eyes, and at the other end of the enclosure Charlie, the elephant, had a cement-floored barn all to himself. He lived quite comfortably, eternally munching hay and whisking bunches of it over his huge, wrinkled sides to drive away the flies.

In the center of the menagerie was the great arena cage, where palms and bamboo plants were nurtured to make a background for jungle pictures. Beside it was the smaller training cage, where the four-footed actors were trained for their parts or were let in for exercise.

"Pudgy," one of the trainers, had known me as a child on the shores of Puget Sound, where we had found a common interest in our love of the wild things. So now he let me take many liberties with his "boarders" as he called them, and would sometimes let me go with him into the cages.

Neither he nor I grieved when Julia died. It was a happy release for her proud, unbroken spirit. Although she had been born in captivity, the jungle had always called to her. She was harsh and stern, and would pace for hours, restlessly, endlessly, pausing only to sniff the air as if the next breeze might bring to her weary nostrils the longed-for scent of marshy water-holes, of hot grass lying sear and brown in African sunshine, of cool grottoes where lay the shredded bones of meat savagely and joyously killed. She was never taken into the arena cage to work in pictures, for she was dangerous. And even Pudgy, who was friend to every animal on the ranch, carried an iron prodding stick whenever he went into her cage.

But when Lisette, the gentle collie, died,

he was sad, and so was I. For even in her cage she had enjoyed life in a quiet, well-bred way, and she had always smiled when she saw us coming. She was loved by all the actors, and they brought her candy when they came to work in the arena cage.

Pudgy would have reared the two orphans separately, but the powers that be of the great studio decreed otherwise. It would be a novelty, they said, for a dog and a lion to be brought up together, and they thought that for a few months, at least, the collie pup would be safe in the same cage with Julia's fat, squinty-eyed cub.

So Pudgy took the two babies, the shapeless, little collie pup and the sprawling, yellow cub, and put them in the same box, covering them warmly with flannel, for the nights were cold, and he fed them from a bottle filled with warm milk. He allowed me to hold the bottle from which Sarah drank, and the lion baby, with ears and paws much too large for the rest of her, tugged at the rubber nipple, uttering high-pitched, petulant sounds whenever I took the bottle away.

Pudgy was gently caressing the tiny, brown ball that sucked sleepily at the bottle he held in his hand.

"Poor little Lady," he was saying softly—he always spoke to the animals as if they could understand him—"you may make a meal some day for that fat daughter of Julia's. Still, if you have a smile like the one your mother had, maybe you'll win her heart and she'll spare your life."

"Oh, Pudgy," I said, "I'm sure they'll be friends. It's the third day of the moon, you know."

Pudgy smiled and nodded. Few people would have understood, but he did. He knew that the Indians of the Puget Sound country where we had lived—the Nittenats and Chinooks—have a legend which says that any creatures, two-footed or four-footed, if brought together under the same roof on the third day of the new moon, will be friends—and faithful friends, too. For long ago the Great Spirit visited the earth in the form of a deer. There came a great forest fire, and he fled before it together with all the wild things of the woods.

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They found a huge cave where they waited until the flames had passed over, leaving them unharmed. And the Great Spirit said to the others, "Let us make a promise each to the other, that in memory of this deliverance from death, those who meet on the third day of the new moon shall be friends." So it was agreed, and the Great Spirit set in the heavens three bright stars, all in a row, to remind those of earth of their promise. We call the constellation "the Eagle." But the Nittenats and the Chinooks call it "the Promise of the Third Day," and although many people have forgotten the ancient vow, the animals have faithfully kept the covenant made in the sheltering cave.

Perhaps you will smile at the old legend, which all the Puget Sound Indians know, but it is true indeed that Lady and Sarah grew up to be fast friends, just as if they had known of the promise of the third day. Sarah did not inherit her mother's disposition, as Pudgy feared she might. She was frolicsome and affectionate, so full of life that she often tired Lady out, and she was as gentle in her play

with the collie pup as if she sensed her superior strength and curbed it so that Lady might not be hurt.

The two occupied an enclosure of liberal size, fenced around by stout wire meshes, directly across the menagerie from the central cage where the large lions were taken daily for exercise and training. And sometimes the older lions would pause in their steady pacing and stare through the bars at the enclosure where a small, fat lion cub wrestled with an equally fat, brown-and-white collie pup, the lion baby tussling silently, the collie infant combining her sallies with shrill barks and many falsetto growls. The tawny, amber-eyed ones would sniff the air curiously, as if questioning what manner of fate had brought these two children together. It was clear that they resented the familiarity with which Lady chewed Sarah's ear or dug into the rough fur of her throat. They would have liked to see Sarah turn on the presuming collie baby and make a comfortable meal on her plumpness. But such a thought was far from the little lion's mind—even when she reached the stage

where milk no longer appealed to her as a completely satisfactory diet.

Sarah had round, gray eyes that would be amber when she grew up. But just now they were baby eyes, inquisitive and bright, and there was always a worried line between her eyebrows as if she were wondering about something she could not possibly understand. Her ears were too large, and she had tiny, white teeth. Sometimes she pretended to be angry, and at such times she would snarl in a high-pitched gurgle that ended with a sharp hiss. It was only then, when her ears were laid back and her eyes filled with hard, bright points of light, that we remembered that she was, after all, a lion in embryo, and we wondered just what her feelings would be toward Lady when she found that they were not of the same breed or nationality.

But Lady and Sarah, it seemed, never discovered the difference. The collie pup might just as well have been a lioness for all she knew or cared, and Sarah, if she had thought about it at all, would have contended that she was as much a collie as Lady. They romped to-

gether continually, ate together, slept together, curled up in the sun, and Sarah grew from cubhood and became heavy and unwieldy, living up to the promise of her large feet and ears. But Lady was small and dainty, like her mother, and she had Lisette's own trick of wrinkling her upper lip when she was pleased.

All the visitors to the studio menagerie wondered at the strange couple in the fenced-in space, for at sight of a friendly face and voice both the dog and the cub would come racing to the wire meshes, eager to have their noses rubbed, and jostling each other aside to get the petting which they felt was due them. Lady, by this time, had found that she could easily manage the lumbering, good-natured Sarah and would snap at her throat sharply when the lion cub tried to get more than her share of caresses. Sarah would stand back then, blinking, with that worried line between her eyes, her ears cocked at a forward slant, her tawny legs spread well apart, as if to be ready on the instant for an invitation to come to the wire netting, or to play a game of tag

with Lady, if that was the capricious collie's whim.

During their brief periods of separation they were miserable. When Lady was taken out for her daily exercise, she would not frolic or rush up to bark at the monkeys as the Malemutes did when they were out for a walk. Unless taken by a leash, she would remain by the cage, sniffing through the wire meshes. And when forcibly taken away, she would sit sulkily on her haunches, contesting the going with all her strength. In her friend's absence Sarah would pace the length and breadth of the enclosure, even as the older lions did, but she had no longing for liberty. She only wanted her playmate, and until Lady returned, she would sniff the air discontentedly, watching with unshakable concentration the point where the collie had last been seen.

When Lady was brought back, the lion cub would make queer, whining noises of contentment, and the collie would bark shrilly and lift her upper lip in a delighted smile. They would greet each other in a frenzy of happiness, racing the length of the cage, licking

each other's faces, and making farcical displays of combat.

So it would have continued for a long time. But as Sarah grew stronger and larger, Lady became as thin as a string, and even a course of dieting could not restore her plumpness. It was clear that too much play with a husky lion cub was telling on her health, for Sarah never knew when to stop, and long after Lady had thrown herself exhausted into a corner of the cage, the lion baby would coax her to resume the fun, springing at her in mock fury, squatting at a short distance, her body wriggling provocatively, and pushing the large, wooden ball, with which they played, up under the sleepy collie's nose. Sometimes Lady, out of all patience with her energetic friend, would bark shortly and protestingly, or snap at Sarah's eager nose. Then the tawny playfellow would back away reluctantly, more than a little hurt by this rebuff, and would blink wonderingly from the far corner of the cage.

One day Lady sickened, and Pudgy decided that she must be taken from the cage until she

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was well again and strong enough to compete with Sarah's vigorous playtime moods, and on the same day a new animal man came on the lot.

He was a thin, surly-looking man who had traveled with a circus and had taken care of the cages of the wild animals. He had no sympathy for them as Pudgy had. He used the double-pronged iron rod to shove them about, and he snarled at them in very much the same tone, it seemed to me, that they snarled at him.

Pudgy was not yet in charge of the menagerie, so he was powerless to curb the new man's rough ways, but he used to shake his head sometimes when he saw him driving the lionesses into the great central cage for exercise. He pushed them remorselessly with the cruel, iron prongs and shouted at them when they crouched and snarled their fear and defiance.

"You can treat a gentleman lion that way," Pudgy told me once, "but with the ladies you must be more careful. He will prod Daisy once too often with that iron rod of his, and

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he will be dead before they can ever get to him."

"If he ever treats Sarah so," I said tensely, "I hope you'll beat him!"

Pudgy looked down contemplatively at the lion cub, half grown now, with a tawny coat that was rough and heavy, but still with ears too big for her, and round, baby eyes with a worried line between them. "Something tells me," he said at last, "that Sarah could take care of herself."

Lady was taken from the wired enclosure where she had spent practically all her life. It was a sad day, and many sad days followed it. Lady's health did not improve as Pudgy had hoped it would, for she spent her time going round and round the cage which enclosed her playfellow, smelling the wire netting and trying frantically to dig underneath. She yelped continually, breaking off sometimes into heartbroken little howls. Then, when she was tired with her futile efforts, she would stretch out by the cage, her long, slim nose pointed into the meshes, her plummy tail draped sorrowfully upon the ground like a flag

at half-mast. And Sarah was equally distraught. Pudgy could hardly make her eat, and once she went for a whole day without touching food or water. She would follow Lady in her circuit of the cage, her ears cocked forward hopefully, the worried line deepened between her eyes. And when the collie gave up in despair, Sarah, too, would stretch herself out by the wires that separated her from her friend, so close against it that her tawny fur pressed through the meshes in little scallops and circles. They were most unhappy, and Pudgy and I were sorry for them. But it amused the powers that be, and annoyed the new animal man. He had no love for either the lion baby or the little collie lady.

One day he made a mistake. I was spending the afternoon with Pudgy at the menagerie, and we were looking at the family of Russian wolves in the long cages at the north end of the lot. All at once we heard the new man's voice, loud with a sharp threat, and immediately after, a high-pitched yelp of pain. With the cry came a snarl that bellowed out into a roar of fury, and there was an

ominous rattling of wires as a heavy body hurled itself against them in a frenzy of hate and wrath. Pudgy and I ran toward the sounds, and as we came around the corner of the open-air arena where the jungle pictures were made, we saw Lady limping away from the enclosure, tail between her legs, and one foot held away from the ground. Sarah was racing round and round the cage, springing up against the stout meshes, the impact shaking the whole enclosure. Her eyes were no longer baby eyes; they were the amber eyes of the jungle lioness who feels the urge of the blood lust. They were savage with fury, her tawny fur stood up in bristles, and she roared, the full-throated cry of the lioness who has come to know her power.

The new man was watching her scornfully, yet a little fearfully, we thought. The other lions in the cages across the lot began to pace fretfully and to roar in sympathy.

"What did you do to Lady?" Pudgy demanded, and I did not know his gentle voice could be so harsh.

"The cursed dog is digging up all the

ground around this cage," the new man answered, sullenly defiant. "She wouldn't get away, and I pushed her with my foot. The fool lion cub went crazy. You'd think I'd given *her* the boot."

"You kicked Lady," Pudgy said again in that dangerously quiet tone. "I'm not much on carrying tales, but if you do it again, you'll be looking for another job."

He paused, and regarded Sarah with understanding eyes.

"And I'd not go in that cage if I were you," he added.

The new man snorted. "Say, you can't tell me anything about handling cats—why, she's nothing but a cub!"

Pudgy regarded him fixedly. "I'm thinking you'll find that she's a lion baby who has grown up," he answered gravely.

There was a company going out on two weeks' location, and they wanted a dog with a trick of smiling. Pudgy recommended Lady. He would take no chances with the new man's ill humor, and he thought that away from the studio menagerie, she would

become reconciled to the loss of Sarah's companionship and get well and strong again. So she was sent away, and the company made much of her. Her little wrinkly smile was so successful on the screen that had she been a human, she would have become a star at once.

But Sarah sulked in her cage. And not even the friendly overtures of Pudgy could rouse her from her apathy of loneliness. She was still as docile as ever, and the men never took prodding irons when they went in to clean or to give her food, but her eyes were amber now, and sometimes she snarled, her whiskered lip curved upward, baring white fangs.

The new man, following Pudgy's warning perhaps, kept away from her cage. But always, when scenting his presence, even across the menagerie lot, she would become restless and pad softly to the wire meshes, staring at him unblinkingly. Her tail would twist into jerky undulations, and she would begin a measured, mechanical pacing that ceased only when he had left the lot. It almost seemed as if she thought him respon-

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sible for Lady's disappearance and hated him the more.

Then, one day, it was decided that Sarah's training for pictures should begin. First it was necessary that she become accustomed to her unknown kindred and that they become acquainted with her. So six of the oldest and most trustworthy lions were driven through the runway which led into the central cage by the arena. They came padding slowly, with the utter indifference which is characteristic of the tawny ones, the males with their great, shaggy manes framing their dignified faces, the females with soft movements of lithe muscles, ears that flicked backward at a word, and with quick, hissing intakes of breath.

Pudgy stood in the center of the cage, armed only with a light whip, and spoke gently to all of them, guiding them to their pedestals without so much as raising his voice. Then he closed the iron door behind him and entered the wire enclosure where Sarah drowsed in the sunshine. He went to her quietly and slipped a leather collar around her

neck. To this he affixed a chain and led her unprotesting out into the open air and into the central cage. He unsnapped the chain and threw it outside the bars. A group of studio men watched curiously. It was always to them an entertaining spectacle when a new lion was let in with the others for the first time. Often there were fights. But Pudgy was there to prevent them.

Sarah stopped in startled wonderment as the iron door swung shut behind her, and sniffed curiously at the older lions on their pedestals, staring at them with wide, inquisitive, amber eyes. They started back, sniffing too, and one of the females snarled and moved on her pedestal.

"Keep your place, Bertha," Pudgy said warningly, and she was quiet.

Sarah pressed close to Pudgy's side as a child might do in a crowd of strangers. She was plainly perplexed by all these tawny things whose scent was so familiar, yet who seemed so strange. Perhaps if she had known they were lions, she would have been afraid, thinking herself a collie dog and therefore at

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their mercy. Pudgy kept his hand on her head between her big, upstanding ears, and finally, when he sat down on a camp stool, she lay down beside him, sniffing and raising her head in little, nervous jerks. Her tail made whispering noises on the floor of the cage as it twitched to and fro. But the other lions did not move. They only sniffed and sometimes snarled. Peter, the oldest of them all, went to sleep without bothering his head further about the new arrival, and Daisy, too, dozed fitfully. Bertha stared resentfully, but did not leave her pedestal.

"No excitement there," said one of the men outside regretfully. "They'll be used to her in a couple of sittings."

"Yes," said Pudgy, "if some one will take my place, I'll go to lunch."

It was the superintendent of the menagerie who came into the cage and sat down on the camp stool, and Pudgy, walking quietly, came out of the iron door and strode off across the lot to the cafeteria. But the superintendent, too, wanted lunch and he called to the new

animal man to take his place, since he had just returned from eating.

The barred door slammed and clicked. It closed behind the superintendent and locked inside the circular cage the new animal man. The older lions scarcely stirred at the sound of the closing door. But Sarah moved, rising to her feet with a single lithe movement. So silent was it that the new animal man did not know. Those looking on them from the outside saw the lion baby crouch, heard a snarl that ended with a hissing spring. They saw a powerful body hurl forward in an arc of tawny fury, saw the stupid look of surprise on the animal man's face as he half turned and was hurled to the floor of the cage by the crushing impact of the lion's charge. Then some one shouted. There was bedlam of hysterical voices, hands tugged vainly at the iron-barred door; men ran aimlessly, hunting for prodding rods. Inside the cage the lions went mad. They leaped against the bars, careened against each other in a delirium of fear, snarled and struck as they passed, dashed past the prostrate man who lay screaming and fending off

with clenched but futile fists the tearing teeth of Sarah, the lion baby, who had found revenge.

I saw as in a vague dream Pudgy's white face, saw him make for the iron door of the cage. He carried a gun and a prodding rod. But it would have been death to have entered there.

Suddenly the animal man's screams ceased. But it was not because death had taken him. For Sarah had lifted her head and gazed fixedly for an instant. Then, with a single bound, she left the torn body of the man she hated, and was pressed against the bars of the cage, jostled by the bewildered lions as they circled the space with only the thought of escape in their frightened minds. She did not notice. For there, outside the cage, sniffing, wondering, and with daintily wagging tail, was Lady, plump and sleek, her brown eyes mirroring astonishment at all the commotion. Then her upper lip lifted in a delighted smile. She yelped feverishly. For she had caught sight of Sarah. The two smelled noses through the bars, Lady jumping about in a frenzy of

delight and her plummy tail waving madly. Sarah was whining softly with a baby note we thought she had forgotten.

So Pudgy opened the door of the runway, and the lions entered it gladly, padding swiftly back to the peace and quiet of their individual cages. Willing hands lifted the animal man from the floor and carried him, bruised and bleeding, to the hospital near by.

Sarah did not even know he was gone. She was telling Lady, as well as she could, of her loneliness during the past weeks, of her joy at the return of her friend.

Pudgy stood looking down at her, and there was something of respectful wonder in his gaze. I wondered if he was thinking of the third day of the moon. I was.

The animal man lived, but stayed no longer at the studio menagerie. And it was due to Pudgy's influence that Sarah and Lady were put together again in the wired enclosure. For Sarah had outgrown her sportive cubhood and was content to lie quietly stretched out in the sun with Lady curled up beside her.

The lion baby is full-grown now; her eyes

are the color of pale amber, and the worried line between them is gone. Her tawny coat is rich and thick; her paws are huge and padded. But still she is Lady's devoted slave. She is a willing pillow for the sleeping collie to sprawl upon; she allows Lady to have the sunniest corner of the cage. And the daughter of the gentle Lisette is not to be coaxed from the enclosure with flattering words or bribes of juicy meat. She will cock her ears, thump her tail in pleased acknowledgment of the compliment, and wrinkle back her lip in a deprecatory smile. But from Sarah's side she will not stir.

People seeing the two together marvel at their friendship. Some of them make dire prophecies that Sarah will one day take Lady for a meal. But they do not know of the promise of the third day, for humans have forgotten the ancient agreement. But the animals remember it, and Lady and Sarah will keep the covenant.

JOE MARTIN, GENTLEMAN!

IF you have seen animal comedies upon the screen, then you have seen Joe Martin, the trained orang-utan. A great, awkward fellow he is, with a flat, uncouth face and eyes that seem to be always asking and never quite understanding. His arms are long and hairy, and the strength of them is almost unbelievable. A comedian is Joe Martin, the orang-utan. He is dressed in ridiculous clothes and made gravely to perform ridiculous antics before a steadily grinding camera. He is never taken seriously—what comedian is?—and his talent for buffoonery has been exploited in half a dozen countries. Yet there was in his career a moment when he rose to heights of nobility. He was no longer a clumsy clown directed through a series of antics he did not understand, that children and grown-ups might

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laugh at them upon the screen; he was a solemn, portentous figure, vested with the dignity that comes of renunciation and self-control. It was a big moment for him, and I like to think that it compensated for the sad business of being funny. I am glad, too, that I was a witness of his triumph, and that Joe Martin looks upon me as a friend.

It was some eight years ago that a party of game hunters in Borneo captured a baby orang-utan, with legs and arms much too long for him; sad, almost human eyes, and a very natural resentment for the treatment to which he had been subjected. "Joe Martin" was what they called him because he resembled, so they said in jest, one of the men of the party. They fed the queer jungle baby canned milk and made him understand little by little that no harm would come to him. Then they began teaching him simple tricks, and he learned with a rapidity that was amazing.

The native bearers were afraid of him, yet they never molested him. For there is a dim legend come down from misty ages gone, that in the bodies of apes and orang-utans are im-

prisoned the souls of men who have sinned, and who are punished thus for their transgressions. Had Joe Martin been less human in the things he did, they would not have feared him. But he ate at the table with the hunters, handling his dish of bread and milk with grave care. He scrawled clumsily on a paper with a lead pencil, and picked tentatively on the strings of a guitar. They were afraid of him because he regarded them gravely, dispassionately, missing no motion, no inflection of voice. They began to call him "Man-in-a-monkey," and whenever they had an accident or lost a roll of baggage, they blamed his evil influence. So one night they left in a body, and the spokesman returned only to say that if the bearers came back, Man-in-the-monkey must be killed or sent away; that his ancient guilt looked out of his eyes and made unsteady the hands and the hearts of those who had no such burden on their souls.

That is why Joe Martin came, some months later, into the hands of Red Gallagher, who made a business of buying and selling wild

animals. When the young orang-utan was taken over by the animal dealer, he had a fairly good opinion of all the human species, but from Red Gallagher he learned a bitter lesson. He learned that not all men use words instead of blows, and that there are other methods of teaching tricks than by kindness and patience.

It was not Red Gallagher's fault, perhaps, for he had served a sordid apprenticeship with a wild animal show where brutality was considered the only means of governing the four-footed actors. He was no better and no worse than many of his kind, and his methods with Joe Martin would not have been questioned in any circus or vaudeville show. But the jungle baby had known kindness and consideration. He expected it. And when he received his first severe whipping from Red Gallagher because he dropped something he had been told to hold, he drew himself into a corner, wound his long arms about his lacerated, smarting body, and whimpered like a hurt child. Once he rebelled and tried to bite. But that time Red Gallagher tied him and

burned him with a hot poker. After that, he rebelled no more.

He learned quickly, almost miraculously. And he never seemed to realize the strength that was coming into his absurd, long arms. Only he would sit in his cage, his brown hairy hands curled around the bars, and stare unblinkingly until Red Gallagher passed by. Then into his sad, groping eyes would come a spark of light. His upper lip would curl back, and he would utter a short, high-pitched note. Sometimes, when Red Gallagher passed by, Joe Martin would leap across his cage and leap back again to the bars, shaking at them in a delirium of rage. There were wiser, more humane men who advised caution and kindness in handling the young orang-utan, but Red Gallagher had worked with gorillas. He had tamed them, intimidated them. He saw no reason for fearing a spindling, young monkey, even though that monkey seemed to possess more than average intelligence.

But there came a day when he knew that Joe Martin had found his strength. It was noticeable, from the first day that Red Gal-

lagher whipped him, that the orang-utan hated not only his keeper, but all who were the keeper's friends. If any man passed by the cage with Red Gallagher, Joe marked him, leaped upon the bars, and if the man came alone, Joe would utter the high-pitched note of hatred and curl back his lips from sinister teeth. There was one, a certain "Dutch," who was Red's crony. And one day, being made incautious by liquor, he went into Joe Martin's cage and attempted to put him through his tricks. He carried with him an ugly-looking whip. But when he raised it, he found himself borne to the floor by a hairy, brown fury, and felt his breath cut short by long, sinewy hands about his throat. His choked cry brought Red Gallagher to his rescue, and Joe Martin drew back into his corner, quivering and shrieking with rage, while Red lashed him until the blood spurted.

It was during the next week that the young orang-utan was sold to the representative of a motion picture company in California. For Red Gallagher had learned a lesson. He had learned that Joe's capacity for hate was far

deeper than he had imagined. He knew that some day the "orang" would be full-grown and powerful. But he had yet to learn how the jungle child could remember brutality and undeserved punishment.

I hope all this has not prejudiced you against Joe Martin. I have drawn, I am afraid, a somewhat sinister picture of him. Yet he was not forbidding. Beauty he may have lacked, but he was, to those he loved, gentle and obedient. He remembered small kindnesses. And he was courteous and amiable to the other animals with whom he worked.

I knew him years later as the star performer in animal comedies for the screen, at a big California motion picture studio. He was full-grown now, and his great hands were brown and sinewy. His sad, brown eyes were a little dull, but they still seemed to ask and try almost desperately to comprehend the why of things. He had grown a sort of beard, too, that hung solemnly from his chin, and he had quite a vocabulary of soundings, ranging from joy to deepest sorrow and fiercest anger.

He liked me because I never failed to bring

him something to eat—a stick of candy, a bag of peanuts, or a banana. He would accept the offerings gravely, reaching through the bars of his cage to hold my hand with one of his brown ones while he ate with the other. Sometimes Pudgy, the head trainer of the menagerie, would take Joe Martin out of his cage, and the big orang-utan would amble beside me, holding tightly to my hand, making funny little whispering noises that signified deep content.

He adored Pudgy, for Pudgy had given him back, to some extent, his lost faith in mankind. His temper with the directors of the comedy companies was uncertain, and once he attacked a camera man who had the misfortune to be red-headed—like the man who had first disillusioned him concerning kindness and gentlemanly treatment. But when Joe Martin worked in a picture, Pudgy was always on the set with him. Pudgy's quiet word of direction was all that was necessary to make him give full attention to the action through which he was to go. If the demands of the scene were more than usually difficult,

Pudgy would give Joe Martin a sort of rehearsal, showing him in minute detail what he was supposed to do, speaking slowly and carefully as if the orang-utan could understand every word. And Joe Martin would watch him intently, almost pathetically, his sad, brown eyes fixed unwinkingly on the face of the trainer, trying earnestly to comprehend so that he might do everything perfectly. Then the camera would grind, and with Pudgy behind it, giving the directions in the same order he had before, Joe Martin, garbed in grotesque coat and trousers, with perhaps a high silk hat, would shuffle into the camera's eye and go through his stunts gravely and accurately, never looking toward the clicking camera or at the group of men behind it.

"Cut!" The director would call, and Pudgy would speak to Joe Martin cordially, as to any other actor who had acted his part in an estimable manner.

"Good work, old boy. Come over here and have a bite of apple."

Now Joe Martin had, besides Pudgy, an-

other friend to whom he was deeply attached. This was "Skipper," a small monkey with a wrinkled forehead and a very long tail, who shared Joe's cage with him. Although there was a great dissimilarity in their sizes and dispositions, the two were devoted to each other, and Skipper was disconsolate when Joe Martin was taken from the cage to work in a scene.

He was a very small monkey, as I have said, but he ruled Joe Martin with a despotic and temperamental hand. When visitors to the menagerie would offer Joe a piece of candy through the bars, Skipper would crowd in front of his cage mate, chattering excitedly, and snatch the morsel away from under Joe's very nose.

Only once did Joe Martin ever rebel at the tyranny of the audacious Skipper. I had offered Joe a piece of peanut-brittle, his favorite confection. And Skipper, as usual, had tried to snatch it from him. But for once Joe was not to be dealt with so high-handedly.

He turned with one lithe spring and pounced upon Skipper, who uttered a startled

squeak and dropped the candy. Joe Martin did not eat the regained dainty at once. Justice was first to be administered. Deliberately he searched for Skipper, who fled, shrieking with fear and astonishment, up to the trapeze in the middle of the cage. With one spring Joe Martin jumped for him, and before the smaller monkey could escape, the orang-utan was holding him firmly in his great hands, was cuffing him lightly but thoroughly as an exasperated parent might box the ears of a sadly spoiled child.

Then he released the screaming, struggling monkey, and as calmly as if he had been performing a part of an everyday routine, swung himself down from the trapeze, picked up the candy, came to the bars, and stuck one hand through for me to hold. He was blinking sadly with his dull, brown eyes, and his curious beard gave him a patriarchal appearance.

Now it happened, by a curious turn of fate, that Red Gallagher came once more into Joe Martin's life. It was not so strange, either, for Red was an experienced animal man and

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was valuable to the studio with the great menagerie where Joe Martin lived.

Pudgy told me of his coming. "A big man," he said, "but little inside, if you know what I mean. He thinks the way to make animals obey you is to make them afraid of you. He has a trained bear that he's renting to the studio, but he's going to help direct the animal comedies, too."

"And Joe Martin?" I asked, for at that time I knew nothing of Red Gallagher's former acquaintance with my friend, the orang-utan.

Pudgy shook his head, scowled thoughtfully. "Not Joe," he said. "Joe hates him. Red owned him once—bought him from a bunch of explorers in Borneo. I imagine he used his knock-'em-down tactics on Joe—in fact, he almost said as much. Laughed when he spotted Joe in the cage. Said there was old Man-in-a-monkey that he had broken in years ago."

"And did Joe—"

"Remember him? He certainly did. He almost went crazy trying to get at him. It was all I could do to soothe him, and he

wouldn't work at all that day. Sat in his cage and sulked. Even Skipper was afraid of him. I'd like to know what's in that old fellow's mind. I think he's remembering back, piecing together his memories of Red Gallagher. I shouldn't like to be in that man's boots if Joe ever gets at him."

They were preparing, at the studio, for a special jungle comedy that should have in it the elements of drama as well. Charlie, the elephant, was going to work in it, some of the older and more tractable lions, Joe Martin, of course, who was cast as a sort of grotesque hero, and even little Skipper was to swing from a limb of a tree, head downward, to provide jungle atmosphere. Most of the scenes were to be made in the arena cage of the menagerie, but the ones in which Joe Martin was featured were scheduled for a real thicket on the bank of a river, for he could be trusted not to try to escape.

The interior scenes were even then being made. And when, one afternoon, I visited the studio, it was to find Joe working in a set that simulated a nursery. Held lightly but care-

fully in his arms was a baby, who was contentedly pulling at the bottle of milk Joe held for her. The big orang-utan was dressed in a nurse's costume, and his solemn eyes blinked ludicrously from beneath a starched cap.

"Joe seems to like the baby," I commented.

"Yes, he really does like it," Pudgy answered. "And it isn't afraid of him, either. Goes to sleep in his arms and hangs on to him when its mother tries to take it away."

I mentioned to Pudgy that I had heard a report that Red Gallagher was going to direct the location scenes.

"I've warned him about Joe," he said, "but he laughed it off. I hope everything will be all right, but I have a hunch that something unpleasant is going to happen."

Even in face of Pudgy's "hunch," I went with the company on location that day. I rode with Pudgy in his car, and Joe Martin sat between us, solemnly interested in the wheel, the brakes, the needle of the speedometer. Skipper, fastened with a belt and chain, sat at my feet, chattering pleasantly to himself, hunting assiduously for fleas, and now and

then cracking the peanuts I handed down to him. It was a bright, sunshiny day, with no portent of coming evils. Yet Pudgy's face was very grave, and during the long ride he scarcely spoke.

I shall not soon forget that scene on the river bank—the cameras standing stiffly in the center of a little clearing, the silvered screens behind them, so placed as to catch and reflect the light, boxes, chairs, megaphones scattered about, and a small group of men moving about with seeming aimlessness, yet with studied purpose in every movement. One of them had climbed a tall tree by the river bank. In his arms he held a dummy baby, which he deposited in a little nest which had been made by tying and interlacing branches together.

Pudgy explained the action of the coming scene to me. "The baby, you see, is found in the jungle and brought up by all the animals. Joe is the foster father, who finds the baby and takes him up to this tree where he makes a nest for him. They will use the dummy baby to get the right focus, then we'll have Joe carry the real baby up into the tree."

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"Isn't it quite a risk?" I asked dubiously. "I know that his intentions would be good, but—"

"I'd sooner trust Joe to carry that baby safely than I would a man," said Pudgy firmly. "If only Red Gallagher doesn't ball things up!"

Into the clearing the other machine came whirring. The rest of the needed cast were in it. Red Gallagher, the director, a prop man, the mother of the baby, and the baby herself, who was staring with wide blue eyes at the strangeness of her surroundings.

From behind me I heard a sharp snarl. And when I turned, startled, Joe Martin was leaning forward from the seat of the car, his lips turned back from his teeth and his eyes strangely bright and menacing. He had caught sight of his former master. But Pudgy's soothing hand was upon him, and his voice, though quiet, was stern.

"Quiet, old fellow. You aren't to touch him. Do you hear, you aren't to touch him."

Joe turned his sad, squinting eyes up to the face of the man he adored, and relaxed. Skip-

per shoved at him petulantly, and the big orang-utan obediently moved so that the small monkey could climb up on the seat and see what was happening.

Pudgy wiped his forehead with his handkerchief. "I wish this day was over," he said fervently.

"All ready for action," called the director. "Get Joe out here. Give him the baby—up the tree he goes with it."

Pudgy led Joe out of the car, the orang-utan holding tightly to his trainer's hand and walking in an awkward, pigeon-toed fashion. The mother of the baby was nervous, and for once was fearful about trusting the girl-child in the hairy hands of the simian actor.

"It's all right," Pudgy assured her. "Joe is as much at home in the tree as he is on the ground. He's done the stunt once with the dummy, and I guarantee that he won't let the baby fall."

The baby girl, seeing her curious nursemaid, laughed and stretched out her arms to him, and Joe solemnly extended his own long, brown arms and took the child gently and care-

fully, while the mother trembled, almost on the verge of refusing to allow her little one to be in the scene.

"All right, Joe," Pudgy was saying. "Go up the tree. Take it easy—be careful—*careful*, old man; don't drop that baby. Go on up higher—that's right. Now swing down into the nest, put the baby in it. Easy, easy, now. Sit down beside it—that's right. Hold it—stay there."

The camera was grinding steadily, the man at the handle quite unmoved at the tension which prevailed. For the mother was standing with her hands clenched tightly together, the director was watching narrowly, and even Red Gallagher seemed nervous and worried. But Joe was, as Pudgy had promised, thoroughly at home in the tree. He held the baby in one powerful arm and drew himself up into the branches with the other. Then, using his curious, hand-shaped feet, he walked from limb to limb with as much aplomb and unconcern as if he had been on the ground. When the nest was reached, he put the baby gently into it, seated himself beside the girl-child

and stared down at Pudgy for further orders. Watching him, we drew long breaths of relief.

"Good boy," called Pudgy, and Joe Martin blinked at him solemnly.

"All right," said the director crisply to Pudgy. "You keep your eye on Joe and the baby, and you, Red, get Skipper up into the tree for his little stunt."

Pudgy moved uneasily. "Hadn't I better—"

Red Gallagher snorted at him. "Say, do you think I'm afraid of that precious orang of yours? He knows better than to get fresh with *me*."

"Oh, sure," the director cut in impatiently. "Joe's all right. Get Skipper, Red, and take him up into the tree."

The rest of the scene is blurred in my mind. For I was conscious of Pudgy's premonition of disaster. I could sense the strained concentration with which the orang-utan watched Red Gallagher's ascent into the limbs of the tree.

"Quiet, Joe; take care of the baby," Pudgy was saying over and over, and Skipper, his skinny little arms clasped tightly around Red

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Gallagher's neck, chattered half in excitement, half in fear, as he found himself carried higher and higher into the tree, above the nest where Joe and the baby were ensconced.

"Now, Red," the director called up to the man in the tree, "let Skipper loose and make him hang by his tail from that branch near you."

Red snapped the belt loose from the little monkey's waist and attempted to carry out the director's commands. But Skipper had seen his friend, Joe Martin. And leaping from Red's hands, he caught a near-by limb in order to swing himself down to join his cage mate.

Red Gallagher swore and caught him by the tail. Skipper turned on him with a shriek of surprise. I saw the man cuff him sharply—heard again the monkey's protest of pain, and then—

We heard a deep-chested roar, the snarling jungle cry of the enraged orang-utan. There was a crash of branches—the flash of a brown body hurtling upward—a strangled exclamation—Red Gallagher caught instinctively at a

supporting limb—but Joe Martin was upon him!

Dimly I heard the men on the ground shouting—felt myself pushed aside by some one—saw as from another world those swaying, cracking branches, the mingled forms of man and beast, the man fighting in a mad frenzy of defense, the orang-utan clutching him, bending him backward with his great, powerful hands—

There was a terrific crash, and the two fell, the man throwing out his arms—catching at an interlaced network of branches he righted himself, clung to the limb—there came the shrill cry of a terrified baby, and then, from the woman beside me, a scream:

“Oh, God, *my baby!*”

In that instant we saw the child sink through the broken network of branches, throw out its tiny arms—and remain suspended there in mid-air, caught by its dress.

And in the same moment, I heard Pudgy’s voice booming through a megaphone, a voice strangely powerful and dominant—

“*Joe Martin—get that baby!*”

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For a ghastly second the orang-utan stared down at him, his hairy hands still clutching the body of the man who had defied his vengeance. His eyes were red with hatred; his lips were pulled back from his teeth. It was his moment of triumph, his moment of long-delayed revenge—

"Joe Martin, get that baby!"

Joe turned his head ever so slightly and saw the baby, dangling there between cruelly sharp and broken branches, its little dress ripping downward from the weight. Skipper was racing from limb to limb, terrified, chattering—

For an instant, eternity-long, Joe Martin stared, and then—

Slowly, deliberately, the orang-utan released his hold on Red Gallagher. The flame in his eyes burned down; his face was sad and grotesquely placid once more. With utter calmness he swung himself out on the limb beneath the baby, reached up to it, caught it in one powerful arm, and drew it down to him. The child was screaming with terror, but it clung to Joe Martin desperately, and he, holding it

carefully and firmly, swung down from limb to limb, scuttled down the sloping trunk, and laid the baby in Pudgy's outstretched arms.

He did not once look up into the tree where Red Gallagher was weakly crawling down to safety. He gave no heed to the mother of the child, who was laughing and crying with relief. He waddled awkwardly on all fours to the machine in which he had come, pulled himself up into the seat, and sat there, hunched abjectly. His moment of triumph had come—and gone. He was still unavenged.

Some one was saying hysterically that they'd call it a day. There was a banging of camera cases and reflecting screens as they were loaded swiftly—and for once, carelessly—into the waiting car. There was a small flurry of arms, legs, and tail, as Skipper scuttled down from the tree and leaped into the machine, where he wound his arms tightly around Joe's protecting bulk, wrinkled his forehead, and chattered unhappily.

Pudgy took my arm and led me toward the car in which we had come. I was still in a daze. Then I saw Red Gallagher coming

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toward us. His face was scratched and bleeding, and his neck was red with the imprint of Joe's powerful fingers. But in his eyes was a curious look of shamed admiration. Joe watched him as he came, and snarled. But Red Gallagher did not flinch.

"Well, sir," he said—and I could not tell whether he was speaking to Pudgy or to Joe—"I never thought I'd be apologizing to a monkey. But old sport"—and he *was* speaking to Joe—"you're a gentleman. Will you shake?"

In that moment a gleam of understanding looked out from the eyes of the jungle child whom the natives had called "Man-in-a-monkey." Somehow, deep inside him, he knew a satisfaction that was better than revenge, or perhaps it *was* revenge. He looked up into Pudgy's face with sad, questioning eyes.

"That's right," his trainer said earnestly. "He means it, Joe. Shake and call it square."

Slowly the big orang-utan extended his brown, uncouth paw, and Red Gallagher shook it.

We were all quiet as we drove back to the studio. Even Skipper, the irrepressible,

seemed awed and subdued by the afternoon's frenzied adventures. I found a piece of candy in my pocket, gave a piece to him and one to Joe Martin. Joe accepted it gravely, reached for my hand, and held it while he ate. He was blinking solemnly, staring at the road ahead. Perhaps I only imagined it, but it seemed to me there was an unaccustomed dignity in his demeanor. It was as if he was realizing that he, a comedian, had played a part in drama, had scored a triumph worthily and well, and found it sweet to contemplate.

THE WHITE WISH

ONCE, when I was a child out in the Northwest on the shores of Puget Sound, I wished that I might ride on a star-beam up to the moon.

And the old Siwash chief, hearing me, shook his head. "It is a white wish," he said, "and unlucky."

The Indians always spoke so of a wish that was idle and impossible of fulfilment. For once, in the long ago, a famous chief of the North had wished that the fertile, blossom-covered land about him might turn to gold. And the Great Father, hearing him, had been angered at his covetousness. He stretched out his hand, and the snow fell. For many days and nights it fell, and at last all the chief's domain was buried under a blanket of white, deadening snow that froze blossoms from their stems and covered all the fields and rivers

with a blasting, deadly coldness. So thus it is that the Indians speak of a wish that is impossible of fulfilment. A white wish, they say, can come true only through a miracle, and to speak casually of something which cannot be accomplished is to bring disaster upon one's self.

Yet many were the white wishes I made in those days—that I might fashion for myself a necklace of phosphorescent water bubbles; that I might find where the Night Wind made his home, and ask him what he sang; that I might change myself into a sea gull and fly out over the bay when a storm was coming. Foolish wishes, all impossible of fulfilment. But once, many years later, a miracle happened, and a white wish came true. I am sorry the Siwash chief cannot know of it.

In a circus that wintered in a great, Western city I came to know Charlie, the elephant, and Sammy, the baby horse. I was of the Press, and because I loved to wander through the animal tents, and bring peanuts to the sad-eyed little monkeys and catnip to the great, tawny lions, the trainer of all the animals let

me come often under the big top, introduced me to the four-footed actors he liked best, and told me of their moods and their whims.

One afternoon which I shall always love, he let me ride Charlie, the elephant, in the pageant that preceded the performance. I was decked by the wardrobe mistress in gaudy, Oriental robes of blue and green and shining gold, with a head-dress on which were little, tinkling bells. There, in a painted howdah far up on the massive back of the great leader of the herd, I sat and clung, while the little bells on my head-dress tinkled as if shivering with delight, and all the blaring noise of the circus came up to me from what seemed a great distance beneath.

From far away under the big top I heard the triumphal chords of the Oriental entrance march. A shout from the trainer, and Charlie swung from his stall out in the lead of the gray elephants, and he was thudding slowly, heavily, toward the main tent in perfect, though massive, rhythm with the music.

Athrill with the novelty of the strange, but delightful ride, I leaned from the howdah's

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side and looked down upon the animals beneath. It was then that, filtering through the distant notes of the band, I heard a soft nickering. There, in a group of horses gaily caparisoned for their entrance in the pageant, was a great, white horse with a foamy mane and a white forelock that hung between his eyes. It was he who had called to Charlie as he passed. The huge elephant stretched out his wrinkled trunk, and for an instant it touched the nose of the white horse. Then he lumbered past, and soon we were in the big top with its terraced rows of faces upturned like strange, eager flowers.

It was over all too soon. We passed magnificently around the oval sawdust ring—the horses, the chariots, the performers, the foolish, grinning clowns. We were back again in the animal tent. Charlie was made to kneel, and I was lifted from the little painted tower in which I had been enthroned. But even the thrill of my début into the sawdust ring could not take my thoughts from the greeting I had witnessed, and later that afternoon, when the terraced seats of the big top were emptied

of the sudden-blooming flowers and my gaudy Oriental robes were packed prosaically in the wardrobe mistress's trunk, the trainer of all the animals told me that the white horse and the gray elephant were friends. And this is the story as I had it from him that day:

When Sammy had joined the circus many years before, he of all the new horses had no fear of the elephants or of the strange, mingled scent of the lions, the tigers, and the pumas. The other horses feared the great elephants whom they needs must follow in the parades and the pageants, and had to become acquainted with them slowly and gently, so that they would not take sudden fright. But Sammy was a friendly, affable horse with all the trust of a kitten in his big, white body. Perhaps that is the reason the tent men called him "the baby horse," for although he was old in years, he was young in spirit. When he went into the big top, he wore a red and gold blanket, and his well-combed mane tossed on his neck like spray. He always trotted happily, as if he enjoyed his part in the performance, and whenever any of the tent

men came near him, he would stretch out his nose to nibble at their sleeves.

He was Charlie's partner in a very pretty act. Fired upon by a toy cannon, he would drop to the ground and lie there as if dead, while Charlie, waving a white flag of truce, would stretch his huge, gray bulk carefully above him. Many were the gasps that went through the terraced tent when the big elephant covered Sammy with his bulk, but the baby horse was not afraid, for the elephant was his friend; his confidence was unshakable.

Then, one day, Charlie, the elephant, proved that he knew what friendship meant. It was a gray day, heavy with clouds, and oppressed with an ominous, restless feeling. All the animals felt it, for the lions paced restlessly, and the tawny males roared challenge after challenge in defiance of the unseen yet tangible thing that worried them. The horses were restless, too, and stamped questioningly in the stable tents where they were tethered. But it was in the ranks of the great, gray elephants that the ugliness of the day took a real and menacing form. At first the huge beasts

swayed from side to side, grumbling. Then one of them trumpeted, and the thin, nasal sound was caught up all along the line until it became a series of nervous and querulous blarings.

The animal men knew the signs and tried to soothe the disturbed elephants, but it was useless. Moment by moment the tension increased. And when there came at last a great clap of thunder smashing out of the skies, the herd went wild with insane fright, and in the animal tent there raged a pandemonium of fear. The thin trumpeting changed to furious blasts of panic, and the chains around the legs of the great elephants snapped as if they had been but leather cords. It was Charlie, the great leader, who swung his tremendous bulk from the ground and ripped through the canvas walls of the animal tent with the others following him in a mad, senseless stampede. Through the open lot they came, Charlie in the lead, his trunk raised high in the air, his small eyes bloodshot, his triangular underlip hanging pendulously. Men and horses scattered before that terrific, thudding mass

of heavy feet and bodies. Down they charged upon the stable tents, where the pageant horses fled before them, rearing and snorting with terror—all but one.

For Sammy stood there motionless in the direct path of the onrushing elephants. His ears were cocked forward, and his eyes wore a surprised and troubled look, but he only snorted a little and braced himself as if to meet the shock of the herd. Another instant and he would have been engulfed by those terrible stamping feet. But in that space of a breath, Charlie, the huge leader, swayed ever so slightly in his lumbering rush, threw his trunk around Sammy's neck, swung him crashing into a pile of hay at the side of the tent. Then he plunged on, trumpeting madly, and there was havoc in the wake of the elephants' stampede.

The rain came pounding on the earth like small, leaden pellets. Little by little the terror went out of the hearts of the gray brethren, and they came to a halt by a grove of eucalyptus trees and stood there looking humble and worried. When the tent men came up to them,

they were glad enough to return to the shelter of their stalls, walking in a single line, holding one another's tails with the tips of their trunks, looking for all the world like children who had been bad and were repentant for the mischief they had caused.

So it was that Sammy, the baby horse, was spared to the world. But his theatrical career was almost ended, for in throwing his friend to safety, Charlie had unwittingly done the baby horse an injury. A sharp stake had lacerated his flank when he fell, and the wound was ugly and slow in healing. It marred the perfect whiteness of his body and ruined him as an actor. The trainer of all the animals liked Sammy and would not force him to lie down upon the sore side; neither was it possible for the ugly wound to be displayed to the public. So his act with Charlie was cut from the program, and he appeared only in the parades and in the pageant which preceded each performance.

But for all that he still trotted gayly, decked out in his blanket of red and gold, and each time Charlie thudded by, the baby horse

would whinny eagerly and toss his mane. Then the big elephant would stretch out his long, wrinkled trunk and touch for the barest instant the soft, white nose. It was like the greeting of two charming aristocrats and had something of old world courtesy about it. Charlie was still in disgrace because he had led the herd into mischief, but to Sammy he was a hero and a well-beloved friend.

Then misfortune descended upon the circus and caught in its sorrowful whirl the two friends of whom I was so fond. For the owner died, and in the wake of death there came legal battles and litigation. In the end, the human performers drifted into other organizations. The trainer of all the animals went eastward to a great city, and the animals were sold. For Charlie the change was not such a bad one, for he found a home in the menagerie of a great moving picture studio where he had a cement-floored barn all to himself and a large pile of hay to munch on. His circus training stood him now in good stead, for he was accustomed to obey orders, and he seemed to take a certain saturnine pleasure in

his work before the camera. He was by turns an Indian elephant carrying a rajah on his back, a lone bull in the depths of the jungle, and a lumbering doctor who carried a medicine case and attended Joey, the orang-utan, who had eaten too many peanuts.

But Sammy was not fortunate enough to continue his theatrical career. He had never been a trick horse, and he was old. It would not be long, said the circus men, before he would show his age, and he would not look well trotting in the pageants and parades with younger and livelier horses.

So he was sold—and it must have been for a very small amount—to an Italian groceryman who had fierce, black mustachios and a beaming smile. He loved Sammy, the baby horse, and I came by accident on my friend of the circus, rejoiced to find him in such kindly hands.

It was a hot day such as only a Southern California springtime knows, but Sammy seemed cool and comfortable. He was wearing a neat straw hat through which his big, white ears stood up, and the strings were tied

under his chin in a flaring bowknot. The flies were circling about him as he stood outside the little grocery store, waiting for the proprietor to load the delivery wagon which he drew, but they did not annoy him. For a cloth had been tied to the harness so that it protected the slowly healing wound on his flank.

I stopped and rubbed his nose, and he nuzzled against my hand, his big, brown eyes surveying me with affectionate surprise. The kindly Italian beamed upon me as he carried the box of groceries out from the store and shoved it into the wagon. He was pleased to know that I was a friend of Sammy's.

"A fine horse," he assured me earnestly. Like a child he was, so trusting and gentle and such a willing worker.

He felt underneath the neat straw hat to see if the sponge there was cool enough and wet enough. It wasn't quite, so he dipped it into fresh, cool water, and when he mounted the seat of the wagon and shook the lines over Sammy's back ever so lightly, the baby horse trotted happily away with high, prancing steps

that said more clearly than words, "I am doing this because I like to, not because I have to." The plummy forelock swung between his eyes, and the straw hat was tilted rakishly forward. His lovely mane tossed on his neck like spray, and the little square of cloth over his flank flapped gaily. He had no blaring band, no blanket of red and gold. The magic of the circus was gone. Yet he was happy, for he was well loved.

I saw them often that spring, the baby horse and the big gray elephant, for at the motion picture studio where Charlie lived I was a frequent visitor, and I made it a point to go almost daily to the grocery store of Sammy's new owner. I always took a lump of sugar or an apple to the big, white horse, and many times, as he munched comfortably on the offerings I had brought him, I wished that I might tell him about Charlie. I wished the two could meet again, and I wondered if they would remember and like each other as they did in their days in the sawdust ring.

It was some weeks afterward that misfortune came upon the baby horse and his owner,

the kindly Italian. Almost daily I had seen Sammy trotting happily along the street with his load of groceries, his neat straw hat sometimes ornamented with a rose or a little green feather. I would see him, too, at lunch time, with all his headgear removed and his feed box placed on a pile of empty boxes so that he barely had to lower his head to eat. At such times he always stood with his front feet on the sidewalk, his big body half blocking the traffic. But no one minded, for every one liked the friendly horse with his big, brown eyes and soft, wrinkly nose. Many who passed gave him little donations of food: an apple, a piece of cake, a bit of candy. Sammy accepted any attention gratefully, and the kindly Italian beamed on all those passers-by who stopped to pet the baby horse.

There came a week which I spent away from the hot and noisy city, and when I returned and passed along the street by the little grocery store, Sammy was not outside, and there was a new and unknown name on the windows of the shop.

When I inquired within, I missed another

friend, the swarthy proprietor with the fierce, black mustachios. He was ill, they told me, and the grocery store had been sold.

I went to see him at the hospital, and the mustachios looked oddly black against the waxen pallor of his face. But he smiled at me and said extravagant things about the flowers I had brought to him. There were debts, he told me hesitatingly, and the money from the sale of the store would have to go for hospital expenses and for the comfort of the family back in Italy. If he died—his dark eyes were fixed pleadingly on mine—Sammy would have to be sold. Could I see, perhaps, that some one nice would buy him, some one who would make much of him?

He had kept Sammy so nice and clean, he said, "like a child." Perhaps I would tell whoever bought him about keeping the cloth over the sore place on his flank, and tell him about the straw hat with the sponge inside it for hot summer days?

I promised, near to tears. For I knew somehow that the kindly Italian would not give Sammy another lump of sugar; would never

comb his mane or pile up the boxes so that he could eat without effort.

I could not fulfil my promise, though I tried hard enough. The people who now owned the grocery store had a horse of their own and did not want Sammy. A dealer sold him, and the money paid the funeral expenses of the man who had been such a good friend to the baby horse.

I lost track of my friend and for months did not see him. When I did, I could have cried for rage. I caught sight of him from a street car window, and we were past before I realized that the dejected-looking horse I had seen, hitched to a huge wagon filled with heavy lumber, was Sammy who had aforetime trotted so gaily and so happily. His mane was tangled and unkempt; his once snowy sides were rough and matted with grime. The healed sore on his side had broken open again by the rubbing of the harness, and it was laid bare to the torturing flies. It was hot, and his head was hanging. The once plummy forelock was now only a wisp that hung limply between his eyes.

I descended at the next stop, four long blocks away. Hurriedly I ran back, but Sammy was gone, and the man in the store stared at me when I asked if he knew who owned the horse I had seen outside.

It was then that I made the white wish. I wished desperately—and it was almost a prayer—that something might happen so that Sammy might be happy once more, that he might spend his few remaining years with people who loved him and would care for him. I had seen old horses on the streets, thin and sad-looking, their ribs outlined pitifully under their gaunt sides. I could not bear to think of my friend ending his life so.

Yet my wish concerning him was the whitest kind of wish, made with seemingly no prospect of fulfilment. The Siwash chief would have said that I was bringing bad luck upon myself by making it.

One day, long afterward, I was visiting the motion picture studio where Charlie lived. And as we waited, the trainer and I, for the cameras to be set up by the outer wall of the menagerie where the four-legged actors were

kept, I saw a file of decrepit old horses being driven past, shouted at and lashed into line by a mounted cowboy.

"Lion food," was the laconic comment of the trainer.

I shuddered at the thought of it. And as if the lions in the cages behind us had scented blood from afar, they began to pace restlessly and to roar impatiently. Some of the old horses raised their heads, and I saw the whites of their eyes as they plunged in terror. But most of them plodded heavily, lost to everything but the dull apathy of their misery.

"It seems like a hard end," the trainer was saying, "and yet it is a mercy when you think of it. Poor old hacks, worked to death, cast aside when their usefulness is past. The gunshot that puts them out of their suffering is a blessing—and the lions must be fed some way."

As he spoke, a second file of the doomed horses plodded slowly past us on the road, their heads hanging as if they sensed the fate that awaited them. I knew the trainer was right, and yet I pitied them from the bottom

of my heart and wished that I could take them all and pet them back to health and plumpness.

Then, as I watched, I saw at the end of the file, a big, white horse with a wisp of forelock that swung between his eyes; a horse with trusting, brown eyes and a big, crusted sore on his flank. His coat was rough now, but it hinted somehow of a one-time softness due to care and tenderness. He walked slowly, and there was no happiness in the heavy thud of his big hoofs. But I knew him at once, and I heard myself calling chokingly to him:

"Sammy—Sammy!"

He turned his head, cocked his ears, and his brown eyes sought me out. Then, as I ran to him, he whinnied and thrust his nose against my shoulder.

"It's the baby horse!" I was saying over and over to the cowboy who swung around in his saddle and shouted at me.

The trainer, the director, and the actors crowded around me, asking questions, staring curiously. And I told them as briefly as possible, but no doubt incoherently enough, the story of Sammy as I knew it, and how I wanted

nothing else in the world so much as to see him happy once more.

The cowboy lost patience. To him Sammy was only another morsel of meat for the lions; I, but an intruder who delayed the line of the death march. The trainer drew me away almost forcibly, for I felt that with my arms about Sammy's neck he was safe—and as if he, too, knew that I was trying to save him from his doom, the baby horse followed me and stretched out his soft, wrinkly nose.

The cowboy leaned out in his saddle, and a long, leather whip cut the air with a whistling flash. It fell across Sammy's neck, and he whinnied shrilly and reared. I cried out, and the trainer cursed whole-heartedly. The director said sharply that there was no reason for being brutal—and then—

Inside the big, cement-floored barn there was a muffled stamping and a terrific blast of trumpeting. There came the sound of a jangling iron chain that snapped like a slender cord, and out from the doors thudded a huge gray body, eyes gleaming red, trunk lifted high, under-lip hanging pendulously.

"Run—run!" The director was shouting, and in a panic of fear, men and horses went racing wildly in all directions.

Only the trainer stood his ground; only the trainer—and Sammy.

For the baby horse was standing with his knotted, old legs spread apart, his ears cocked forward, his nostrils quivering. Perhaps it was the elephant scent that he remembered and loved, or perhaps it was the sight of the gray bulk careening down upon him that brought back a thrill of memory and banished the thought of fear from his mind. Another instant, and the big elephant had come to a full stop, half hidden by a voluminous cloud of dust, and Charlie, the old circus veteran, had stretched out his trunk and was fondling the neck and sides of the horse whose friend he had been in olden times.

For an instant Sammy stood there, trembling, the whites of his eyes showing. Then, as if memory had come to him, too, he whinnied and with his white, wrinkly nose he nuzzled the rough, gray trunk that was creeping affectionately over him.

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No one thought to separate them. The cowboy was herding the terrified horses together; the studio men were collecting the scattered camera cases, screens, and megaphones. Then the trainer went resolutely toward Charlie, the elephant, and the old, white horse. The elephant thought Sammy was to be hurt, and he moved slightly, so that his great bulk loomed protectingly in front of his friend.

"It's all right," the trainer was saying soothingly, "I'm not going to hurt him; honest I'm not."

But still the wrinkled old elephant stood his ground, his trunk resting lightly on Sammy's neck, and his small eyes gleamed threateningly.

"The lions are going to have a hard time getting the carcass of *that* horse," the director remarked with satisfaction.

"Lions be hanged!" said the trainer succinctly. "I'm going to buy him myself!"

So now Sammy lives in a comfortable pasture near the studio, and in the winter-time he shares the stable of Charlie, the veteran actor. He is plump and clean once more, and his coat

has the softness of a kitten's fur. The studio men chaff the trainer sometimes about the horse he snatched from the lions' menu card. But he knows, and I know, that Charlie, the elephant, was responsible. Charlie and—I hope—the wish I made so desperately that day. It was a white wish, but it came true. I am only sorry that the Siwash chief cannot know of it.

LUIGI, SERVANT OF FATE

HE is bad, that wolf, and he has no master."

It was Louie, the half-breed trapper, who spoke, he to whom the motion picture studio was a constant source of amazement and sometimes of contempt. Until a party of motion picture actors invaded his isolated haunts in the Adirondacks, he had never glimpsed the flickering wonders of the cinema, nor had he the faintest idea how stories for the screen were made. Trapping was his profession, a prosaic routine of traps visited on snow-shoes, of dead or half-dead animals caught in the steel clamps. And when the director of the company, recognizing in the veteran of the forests a fast disappearing type, offered him a contract at a salary almost unbelievable to his untutored mind, he had accepted dazedly, hardly realizing what had happened.

He had gone to California with the company, and with him had come the wolf, Luigi. For in making the round of his traps for the last time, Louie had come upon the young wolf, held so firmly in a trap that he seemed to be without life. Starvation and cold had had their way with him while he lay pinioned in the cruel teeth of the steel trap, and when Louie found him, he had no more resistance left in him. He sprawled limply in the half-breed's hands.

One leg was broken—his jaws were caked with congealed blood. The trapper would have killed him there. But the director, who had accompanied Louie on this last fur-gathering expedition, put in a word.

"Let's take him to the studio. We often need wolves for northern pictures, and perhaps this one is young enough so that we can train him."

Thus it came about that Luigi, christened for the trapper, made the long journey across the continent and became a member of the motion picture menagerie that was my favorite haunt in leisure hours. It was here that I

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came to know him, a lean, gray, taciturn wolf, with a pointed nose, a tail that was like a trailing smudge of smoke, and eyes that were narrow and sinister gray in color.

My friend, Pudgy, was at that time in charge of the menagerie, and to all the animals there he was gentle and considerate. Most of them repaid his kindness with affection, according to their natures and capacities. But Luigi was contemptuous to all friendly advances. He would not respond to overtures of kindness; neither was he in fear of iron prongs or guns with blank cartridges. Sometimes they worked him in northern pictures in a stoutly barred cage, where the ground was covered with rock salt to simulate snow, and where the transplanted trees were covered whitely with paint and artificial icicles. But they worked him alone, for no man was brave enough to enter the cage with him. If a scene had to be taken with a human being, double exposure was used. He was the largest wolf in the menagerie and the most valuable, but there was no one, not even Pudgy, who could tame his savage heart.

"He is bad, that wolf, and he has no master."

Thus spoke Louie, the veteran trapper. But there came a day when Luigi, the wolf, served a master and achieved the dignity of heroism as a result. The master was not Man. It was Fate.

Now there lived, in this same motion picture menagerie, another wolf, whom French Louie called contemptuously "dat half-breed." Born of a wolf father and a Malemute sledge-dog mother, he had been brought down from Alaska when still a baby ball of thick fur, huge, sprawling paws, and eyes that squinted blankly at the strange world in which he found himself. They called him dog and gave him for a pet to a young girl who was just then making her *début* in the realm of the flickering film. "Juneau," she called him, because his mother had mushed along many a snowy trail to and from that city of the far north. And dog she thought him to be. But he was wolf, all wolf. Except that the crossing of the wild and the tame in him had given him a heritage of sneaking cowardice which had no part in the make-up of those lean, gray

brethren of his father's tribe. The young girl, whom the picture people called "Taddy," although Theodora was her name, loved Juneau and had no thought but that he would grow up into an intelligent, loving, and reliable husky dog, like the other Malemutes who lived at the motion picture studio and worked in northern scenes. But even as a tiny puppy she knew that he would be different from the other Alaskan dogs. For his eyes were not the blue-gray of a baby dog; they were amber, flecked with green. And in the dark they shone with an uncanny, bluish gleam that was like the eery flickering of the Northern Lights.

He was savage in his play, destructive beyond all reason, and when caught, tried to escape punishment with a desperation that was ludicrous. Still they called him dog. But one day, as he had attained an age when something more substantial than milk seemed to be necessary, they fed him a morsel of meat. And then they knew him for the savage thing he was. The wolf in him leaped at the taste of blood. He flew at the girl who had cared

for his babyhood, and his tiny, sharp fangs closed on her hand. He was still so small that she could fight him off, cuff him soundly, and send him skulking and snarling under a sofa. But she had no desire to rear him further. She gave him without ceremony to the motion picture studio.

And thus it was that Juneau, the half-breed, grew to wolfhood in a cage adjoining that of Luigi, true son of the northern forest. They hated each other, those two, and eyed each other through the stout, wire meshes with which their cages were partitioned. They would spend hours slowly pacing from the front to the back of their cages, keeping close to the partition, so close that their breath intermingled, their long, pointed noses almost touched. They hoped, I think, each time they paced thus, that at the end, somehow they would find the partition removed, so that they might fly at each other's throats and appease the hate that was in their hearts.

Now there entered into the lives of the two sinister sons of the wild an element of comedy. Rollo, the goat, was introduced to the in-

habitants of the menagerie and took his place among them, matter-of-factly, even arrogantly, and won no small measure of respect from them by the quality of his temper and the hardness of his forehead. He had been destined, this Rollo, as a sacrifice to the great god Thrill. For it had been planned, so Pudgy told me, that in a picture Juneau was to leap on the goat and bear him to the ground. Laws regulating cruelty to animals were then not so strict as now, and it was deemed legitimate, for the sake of the drama, to deliver the goat into the none-too-tender mercies of the half-breed wolf.

But Rollo in that moment of peril proved his own mettle—and that of Juneau. With the cameras clicking busily outside the barred enclosure, the goat was released and driven into the center of the arena cage, and Juneau was let in upon him.

The wolf caught the scent of live flesh, sniffed for a moment, circled about his intended victim, sprang upon him. But in that same instant, Rollo, with a defiant bleat that was like a war-cry, rose upon his hind legs,

lowered his head, and plunged at the oncoming wolf. There was a crash, the sound of a terrific impact, a gasp of astonishment from those who watched the scene. For Rollo had caught Juneau fairly, had knocked him against the bars of the cage, and had risen majestically for another lunge at his attacker. But before he could charge again, Juneau—"dat half-breed," as French Louie scornfully called him—scrambled to his feet, snarling and yipping, and scuttled away with his thick, gray tail between his legs.

He forgot that he was wolf. He was then only dog, and he was afraid. Around and around the cage the inverted chase continued, while the men watching forgot to rescue the unfortunate one because of the laughter which convulsed them. At last one of them opened the door that led to Juneau's cage, and through it he sped, with Rollo charging down upon him and missing him only because of the door which snapped shut in his bearded and indignant face.

That was when they named the goat "Rollo," mainly because he was everything

that the meekness of his name suggested that he was not. And it was then that he became definitely attached to the menagerie of Universal City, to be used in animal comedies. He earned every head of lettuce they gave him, every succulent tin can. For they worked him constantly, with comedians, with dummies, with animals. Rollo could always be depended on to hold his own, even with the lions. He was utterly without fear, and with that inborn knowledge which the wild ones have of this fact, they respected him, and some of them were afraid of him.

But not Luigi, the wolf, whom none could tame. They knew better than to let Rollo come into conflict with him. Little by little the big, gray wolf dropped out of pictures. For any man who worked with him took his life in his hands, and the Malemute dogs were in deadly terror of him. When they used him in a scene, it was only for the briefest glimpse of his lean, powerful body with its tail that was like a trailing smudge of smoke silhouetted against the sky-line—the sky being a painted drop at the back of the barred arena cage.

Sometimes they drove him into the cage covered with its deceptive sprinkling of rock-salt, the bars being carefully concealed by pines and fir trees freshly brought down from the northern woods of California. Then, outside the enclosure, a violinist would scrape a series of high, nerve-tingling notes on his violin; scrape at them endlessly until Luigi would point his long, thin nose at the painted sky and howl dismally. They called it "howling the wolf," and it was supposed to be humorous. But to me there was always a note of tragedy in that lonely, futile cry of the captive child of the forest. It was as if, surrounded by sham, a painted sky, warm snow, even the very trees fragrant from the sun that was drawing out their hoarded life, he gave vent to the one natural instinct allowed him—the cry of the lone wolf who calls to his brethren of the forest.

The other wolves in their cages, hearing the age-old call, knew it and answered it, their thin voices rising in eery crescendos and dying away in plaintive whines. But Juneau, curiously enough, was afraid of the wolf call. The

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Malemute dog in him heard it and feared it. At such times he would cower in his cage, the bristles standing up along his spine, his eyes gleaming with a hunted, bluish light. Oh, he was brave enough, was Juneau, the half-breed, brave enough to leap at an actor who had turned his back upon him, brave enough to bear down a dog who by accident had come within the radius of his chain when they were using him on location. He would snap fiercely at the director; would snarl at Pudgy and display his white fangs. He proclaimed himself wolf. But when there came that cry of the pack with its sinister longing for blood—then the part of him that was brought into being by one born in subjection grew numb with fear. He remembered that he was dog.

There came a picture in which the girl, Taddy, played the leading feminine rôle. Louie, the trapper, was also included in the cast, and many animals were used. It was to be a story of the northern lumber camps, and the final and spectacular scene was to be the pursuit of the heroine and her lover by wolves. The scene upon the river bank would be made

in full sunlight, but when the film was colored blue, it would seem as if the man and girl ran out of the dark forest into the moonlit clearing with the bloodthirsty pack hard upon them. They were to spring upon a rude raft made of logs, and paddle their way desperately downstream with the wolves clambering on the floating raft.

It was not an easy scene to make. It was to give the lie to those who cried "fake" to any incident upon the screen which seems to suggest danger. Pudgy did not want Taddy to have a part in it, for there were men who could have doubled for her. Judicious cutting and occasional close-ups of her own face would have made the trick detection-proof. But she would have none of it. She refused to take the credit for any risk which she did not really assume. And the director, rather against his better judgment, but with an eye to the exploitation possibilities of her daring, allowed her to go through the rehearsal.

In order to make the final scene convincing, it was arranged by clever "cut-backs" to show the entire pack of wolves trooping through the

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forest, always on the trail of the fleeing pair. The wolf scenes had been taken separately, having been made in the arena at the studio or in a barred enclosure built for that purpose out in the woods. The animals had been kept without food for a day, and they were ravenous. The mere sight of the fresh quarter of beef on the other side of the enclosure was enough to make them hasten across the range of the camera's eye, their eager jaws open, their eyes blazing with hunger. So hungry were they that they did not fight among themselves as would surely have been the case if they had been freed thus at once. Then, at separate times, the heroine and her lover were photographed in action, looking back fearfully, she aiding him to hasten his footsteps, for he, according to the script of the story, was badly wounded.

That part was simple and would be effective upon the screen. There was no danger in it. But in the tremendous climax two wolves were to leave the rest of the pack behind and follow the escaping pair out into the very river. Juneau was chosen for one of these wolves,

because he was easily handled. An old wolf, who had had long training in the pictures was the other. Luigi, too, was on location with the company. He was too dangerous to take part in the final scene, but he was valuable for close-ups. He was still defiant and unafraid after a half-dozen years in captivity. Somehow his very attitude, when caught by the camera, made those who saw it upon the screen shiver a little. His was the true spirit of the north, untamed and untamable.

Upon that excursion into northern California went Rollo, the goat, for there were comedy moments interspersed with the tense drama, and it was his rôle to rout a bear who was supposed to come down near the cabin upon a pig-stealing excursion. Rollo had done his work wisely and well. The scene had come out even better than had been planned, and thereafter the bear chained to a stake squealed lustily every time he caught sight of Rollo's majestic countenance with its dangling beard and sardonic, amber eyes. The goat, having acquitted himself with distinction, was staked out by the river bank where the grass was

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sweet and tender. He was spending his vacation simply and enjoyably, as became a successful picture actor.

All was set for the rehearsal. It was planned not to release the two wolves from their cages until the scene was really to be taken. A large chunk of raw meat hidden upon the raft was to be the lure that would draw them down to the river bank. That they would endeavor to climb upon the raft was certain. To hold them off was the man's work.

Taddy and the man went through their rehearsal. They came out of the woods, looking back fearfully, he limping painfully, she bending under the weight of his body as he leaned heavily upon her. They flung themselves aboard the raft, pushed off desperately. The current was swift, but a strong rope kept the rude craft from being swept too far downstream.

"That's good," the director said, "we'll take it."

But the leading man suddenly had an attack of nerves. The property men were wheeling the wolf cages up to the outside of the enclo-

sure. Juneau and Luigi shared a wagon with an iron partition between the cages; the old wolf and his mate had the other. The assistant director was arranging the chunk of meat on the raft where it would attract the attention of the hungry animals.

"I can't do it," said the leading man flatly; "you'll have to get me a double."

It was not an unusual request, and the director was prepared for it. He expected Taddy to change her mind at the last moment, but she did not. She would see it through, she maintained.

So it was French Louie who was made up to resemble the leading man as nearly as possible. He was dressed in his clothes, and his head and arm were bandaged in the same way. The scene was to be made with "long shots," so there was little danger of detection.

"Ready, folks?" the director called.

"Ready," came Taddy's voice clearly and steadily.

French Louie merely grunted.

The cameras began their monotonous clicking; the property men stood by with long, iron

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prods. Every one was nervous, for all liked Taddy and knew she would be in danger.

"All right," the director was saying through his megaphone; "come out of the woods. Look back, Taddy. Lean on her shoulder, Louie. Stagger more—you're almost done for—Taddy, look down at the river bank, see that raft, point to it—go down to it—ready, boys, at the cages—*let out the wolves!*"

There was a grating sound as the sliding bars of the wagon cages were raised by a pulley. For an instant there was no sound but the steady clicking of the camera crank. Then the director gave a shout that was almost hysterical with fear.

"My God! They've let them all out!"

It was true. The property men responsible for lifting the grating had forgotten to arrange the mechanism so that it would open only one cage in each wagon. In the next instant not two, but four lean, gray bodies vaulted out into the enclosure, uttering short, yapping notes, and like furry bullets were charging down upon French Louie and the girl at the river bank.

The two saw their danger ; knew it for what it was. There was no pretense now in their mad efforts to push off the raft from the bank. French Louie ripped out his knife from its leathern case, sawed at the rope which held the raft. As he hacked and cut, the first wolf was upon him. It was the mate of the old wolf. She leaped at him snarling, he struck with his free hand, and she tumbled into the water. Into the barred enclosure came the property men running, armed with revolvers and iron rods. Before they could reach the river bank, two wolves were aboard the raft, tearing at the meat, leaping at the man and the girl. Juneau, the half-breed wolf, was one of them ; Luigi, the wolf without a master, was the other.

In the midst of the *mêlée* of shouts and snarls, the raft, loosed from all restraint, swung out into the swift current, curveting as it struck a whirling eddy of water, threw Taddy to her knees. It was then that Juneau showed clearly the treachery that was in him, for he knew her, knew her for his one-time mistress. She had been kind to him for the

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sake of the time when he was a furry bundle of savage playfulness, but he found nothing in that knowledge to check the lust for blood that was in him.

He sprang upon her, and his fangs ripped away the coarse, woolen dress from her throat. Blindly she fought him off, while French Louie battled with that more ferocious and powerful wild thing that once he had captured. Those of the company ran helplessly along the bank, their guns useless, their iron prodding rods as futile as straws.

French Louie had freed his arm from the sling which bound it. Blindly he slashed at the gray fury which sprang at him; felt himself borne down by a massive furry weight, felt himself flung into the icy water, and knew that the raft was slipping away with a girl and two wolves upon it.

There was no human power then that could have saved Taddy. But suddenly the great, gray wolf, having defeated the man in battle, was aware, it seemed, for the first time, that the other wolf on the raft was Juneau, the half-breed, the wolf whom Luigi hated, because he

sensed in him that strain of cowardice, of common dog, which the wolf tribe hates.

He snarled and sprang, catching the smaller wolf squarely by his throat. Juneau, overwhelmed by the unexpected attack, loosened his hold on the girl's shoulder, turned with a snarl that was half a shriek to do battle with the gray fury that was upon him.

They rolled, they snarled, they drew blood. The raft, solidly made for all its crudity, swung fairly down the middle of the stream, and Taddy slipped down into the water and struck out for the shore.

The raft and its terrible crew were never seen again. Perhaps the two wild things killed each other there, settling their debt of hate. But Pudgy thinks not. He believes that Luigi lived. For that same night, when the company gathered about a huge fire built in front of the cabin and spoke soberly and thankfully of the escape of French Louie and Taddy, there came, from far away, so far as to be only the shadow of a sound, the long, wavering cry of a wolf. Every voice was hushed. The sound came once more, eerily,

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faintly. Then the silence of the night closed in upon it.

"Luigi?" some one questioned.

Taddy put her hand up to her bandaged shoulder. Her face was very pale. "I hope so," she said softly. "I hope so."

The rest of the story is that of Rollo, the goat, for it was he that marshaled the old wolf and his mate back to submissiveness. Some one had thought to let him loose in the enclosure, where the two wolves, made savage by the merest taste of meat, were fighting furiously with each other.

Rollo had charged down upon them with the speed of lightning, the accuracy of a bomb. Too startled to resist and having no knowledge of his somewhat severe tactics, they had fled in dismay to the sanctuary of their cages, where the iron doors stood invitingly raised.

Rollo stood in the open enclosure, shook his head, and bleated triumphantly. He and Luigi, the gray wolf, should have been friends. For in them both lived the spirit of bravery untarnished by fear of any kind. But they belonged to different worlds. Luigi, I hope,

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has his forests and his freedom. Rollo has a comfortable allowance of lettuce and an occasional tin can. They are both happy after their own fashion.

THE END

